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CHOLERIC MAN.

A COMEDY.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

DRURY-LANE.

Jam iſtaec inſipientia eſt,
Sic iram in promptu gerere. PLAUTUS.

By RICHARD CUMBERLAND, Eſq.

THE SECOND EDITION.

186524

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[PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.]

DEDICATION.

To DETRACTION.

High and Mighty Sir,

THE attention, with which you have been pleaſed to diſtinguiſh this inconſiderable production, makes it a duty with me to lay it at your feet. The applauſes of the Theatre gave me aſſurance of its ſucceſs, but it was your teſtimony alone, which could inſpire me with any opinion of its merit: Nor is it on this occaſion only I am to thank you; in whatever proportion I have been happy enough to attract the regards of the public, in the ſame degree I have never failed being honoured with your's.

How I have merited theſe marks of your partiality I am not able to gueſs: I can take my conſcience to witneſs, I have paid you no ſacrifice, devoted no time or ſtudy to your ſervice, nor am a man in any reſpect qualified to repay your favors: Give me credit, therefore, when I tell you, that your liberality oppreſſes me. Was I apt to rate my pretenſions highly, and preſume upon the indulgence of the public, I might have ſome claim to your favor; but 'till you hear me complain that my reward is not equal to my merit, I pray you let me enjoy my content and my obſcurity.

At the ſame time that I would gladly withdraw myſelf from your notice, I have no one in my eye whom I would wiſh to recommend to it: It is my deſire to put you at your eaſe, worn out as you muſt needs be with the toils of your employment; and I ſeriouſly proteſt to you, that if your ſilence will be the conſequence of mine, I am ready to enter with you into articles whenever you think fit; convinced that I can never benefit mankind ſo much as by procuring you a laſting repoſe; nor would you be long to ſeek for a retreat; there are many market-towns in the country

where you may drink your tea in quiet with a reputable set of elderly maidens at a distance from the capital. Above all things I should humbly recommend it to you, to relieve yourself from your labours in the dramatic walk: Consider, Sir, the campaign is now opening; I understand it will be an active one; new competitors will be pressing forward in the field of fame; I could wish you to keep out of their way; enervated as you are by past excesses, you will be ill able to struggle with these young and maiden spirits; but if you must engage, let it, I pray you, be with some of your intimates, if you find any on the ground; and do not pursue those ministerial politics, hitherto adopted by you, of bestowing all your favours on your opposers, and letting your friends go without their reward.

Whilst I am consulting your future repose, do not think I am unmindful of your past renown: It is to you alone, *Most mighty Sir*, we owe the great encrease of *news-papers* (not to mention *magazines*, *reviews*, &c.) in this metropolis. In former times, the world was contented with a stale recital of *foreign and domestic occurrences*, which never came to pass, and a lame account of *casualties*, where no mischief was ever done; now the reader is convey'd under your auspices to the foot of the throne; you have the key that admits him into the cabinets of all the princes in Europe; nay, you can carry him a dance thro' the air, as familiarly as the lame devil did the scholar of Salamanca, and uncover the roofs of our closets and chambers to his view: The world is not only supplied with a faithful history of the times in our public prints, but every private family, thro' your means, may meet its own secret *Atalantis*. These are advantages, which some people of confined notions have not clearly understood, and have rashly proceeded to oppose the tyrranny of the law against the freedom of the press; pains and penalties have been inflicted, mulcts and imprisonments have been put in force against the conductors of your undertaking; but, thanks to our excellent constitution, you still enjoy your full liberty, though many of your partisans are abridg'd of theirs.

The

The perſonal, political and literary characters of men are the three great branches of your ſtudy; eminent have been your reſearches in each; but it is not within the compaſs of this dedication to follow you thro' any but the latter, and that in the dramatic diviſion only: And here I obſerve your ordinary practice hath been as follows:

When any play, like this now ſubmitted to the public, meets a favourable reception on its firſt appearance, the very next morning by break of day out comes your manifeſto; unravels the whole plot and contrivance of the drama, diſſects the characters, detects the plagiariſms, and kindly tells the town what it is to expect; and all this is the dark operation of one midnight hour, while the poor romantic author lies wrapt perhaps in golden dreams of happineſs and ſucceſs: The conſequence of this manifeſto is, the clearing up of many miſtakes which the public would elſe be apt to make: They who have been pleas'd, being told they ought not to have been pleas'd, go no more and avoid an error in judgement; they who would have gone, ſtay at home and ſave their money; the performers, whom ſucceſs might have made giddy, are now prevented from over-acting their ſeveral parts, and ſeaſonably kept down; the author, whom the plaudits of a theatre might have intoxicated to that phrenzy of ſenſibility, in which we are told that * *Philippides the comic poet* expired, is kept in due regimen, and under no danger of loſing the moderate ſhare of ſenſes you allow him; Thus you ſtand, like the admoniſhing ſlave in the triumph, to remind the conqueror that *he is a man*; if therefore the ſhouts of the people are loud, you hallow in his ear, ſo as to be heard above the cry; if they are moderate, you whiſper; but where the people are ſilent, the admonition is unneceſſary; and whenever your own friends mount the carr, your delicacy in their inſtance is conſpicuous, by the profound taciturnity you obſerve.

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* *Philippides quoque Comædiarum poeta haud ignobilis, quum in certamine poetarum, præter ſpem viciſſet, et lætiſſimè gauderet, inter illud gaudium repente mortuus eſt.* AULUS GELLIUS iii. xv.

In

In the instance of the present imperfect performance (thus laid at your feet) I have had opportunity to experience your concern for me in a peculiar manner: Ill-health, and other melancholy attentions, which I need not explain to you, kept me at a distance from the scene of its decision; on this occasion you redoubled your admonitions, apprehensive, no doubt, that I should give way to the flattering report of my friends, and fearful that I should yield to that weakness, of which the mind, when under the visitation of affliction, is evidently most susceptible.

Nor is this the only error I might have fallen into, I must confess to you I had vainly flatter'd myself with the design of addressing this Comedy not to you, *High and Mighty Sir*, but to an amiable, and elegant friend, to a lady whose criticisms under favour differ as widely from your's, as *Shakespeare* does from the author of the *Choleric Man:* This lady, Sir, (whose name I forbear to mention, as it is unknown to you) was called upon in defence of a countryman to enter the lists, tho' the mildest of human beings, with the renowned *Voltaire* (I do not disguise his name from you, because I think on certain subjects, especially where Christianity is concerned, you have sometimes taken part with him): The spectators of the combat gave the victory to the lady; the action is recorded in pure English; but if you please to turn to the particulars of the attack, which was on her side, you will find it conducted upon principles so opposite to your own, that you will probably differ in opinion from the rest of mankind and give your palm to her antagonist: You I know would have proceeded according to all the rules of modern finesse; sapping, undermining and blowing up; working like a mole out of sight, and over-turning all things in confusion and ruin; she, in the spirit of ancient times, carried on her approaches in open day-light and above ground, combating with such weapons only, as *Greece* and *Rome* had put into her hands under the plain guidance and direction of her own wit and judgement. To this *lady*, in pure affection and esteem, I had purposed to have inscribed this Comedy; but when you told me

it

it was not worthy even of my poor genius, how could I suppose it a fit tribute to her's? She will therefore in the simple phrase accept the will for the deed; and if she should chance upon refusal to dissent from the opinion you have given in the case, I must beseech her to distrust herself, and to believe there is one quality, very apt to mislead and be misled, which she possesses in a greater degree (if possible) than either wit or judgement, and that is called (pardon my introducing it into your presence) *Benevolence.*

How ridiculous should I have made myself, if, following the false lights of popular applause, I had presented this *heterogeneous* piece (as you are pleased to call it) to one, whose genius might have merited the original from whence it pretends to be derived; not the *'Squire of Alsatia* I mean, but the *Adelphi of Terence:* With respect to the above-mentioned *'Squire*, which I understand is the offspring of *Mr. Shadwell*, if I have ignorantly robb'd him of any part of his patrimony, I hope it will not be imputed to me; for I do seriously declare that to my knowledge I never saw him, or ever had any commerce or acquaintance with him, or knew, 'till you informed me, that he had so respectable a father: It is to you therefore, *ingenious Sir*, I am indebted for the discovery that I have lost sight of an original which I pretended to have copied, and copied one which I really never saw.

But I would beg leave humbly to observe that the plot of *Terence* was never in my contemplation; it requires the genius of *Mr. Mason* to make the Grecian simplicity live on our stage; I dare not attempt it even at your command; but if you wish to have it tried, go to your *Terence*, you will find it ingeniously and ably translated, and bring his *Brothers* on the theatre; I fear even my illegitimate race, if tried by a jury of English freeholders, will oust the representative of the heir apparent, nay the very heir himself, if he was to come in his own person to assert his right.

Athens and *London*, *Most Mighty Sir*, cannot as I conceive be easily compared: In your department I am apprised how much advantage dwells with the latter; in mine we are grievously worsted: I have ventured

to hint to you in the dull *prologue* I have prefix'd, that there were at leaſt fifty comic poets flouriſhing at one period in *Athens*, and moſt of theſe lived to write more plays than all our fraternity now alive put together; tho' you I believe may think ſome of us have already written more than enough. **Menander*, *learned Sir*, you well know is ſaid to have written 80, or according to ſome, 180 Comedies, and that they were all tranſlated by *Terence*; but if we take the teſtimony of ¶*Apollodorus*, the number will amount according to his computation to 105, and the ſame authority tells us that out of theſe 105 Comedies, *Menander* carried away but eight prizes, while §*Euripides*, as *Varro* informs us, on the other hand, out of 75 Tragedies was victorious only in five. Theſe inſtances will ſuffice to give us ſome idea of the comparative ſtate of genius in the two places and periods.

Amongſt all theſe plays and all theſe poets, which the Athenian ſtage can boaſt, I ſhould doubt if you could have found half the employment which our ſcanty fraternity at home afford you: Be pleaſed, *learned Sir*, to try your ſkill upon any one of *Ariſtophanes*'s comedies; take his ‡*Clouds* for inſtance; if you was literally in the clouds you could not be more to ſeek; and unleſs Dr. *Johnſon*, or Mrs. *Carter* will take you by the hand (and how that ſhould be I don't know) you will never get thro' the fog—Turn over a Fragment of †*Philemon*; what do you think of it? Write a column in the news-papers upon it; is it not as *hetcrogeneous* a thing as the *Choleric Man?* Caſt your eye over thoſe paſſages of ‖ *Diphilus*; do you ſee no

* *Scripſit* (ſc. Menander) *Suidâ teſte* 80 *Comœdias, vel ſecundum alios* 180, *qui etiam a Terentio converſas eſſe omneſq. intercidiſſe aſſerunt.*

¶ *Ex iſtis tamen centum et quinque omnibus, ſolis eum (ſc. Menandrum) octo viciſſe idem Apollodorus eodem in libro ſcripſit.* A. GELL. xvii. iv.

§ *Euripidem quoq; M Varro ait, quum quinque et ſeptuaginta tragœdias ſcripſerit in quinque ſolis viciſſe.*

‡ Νεφέλαι.

† *Philemon lived in the time of Alexander the Great; he was a writer of the* New Comedy, *and is ſaid by Suidas to have written ninety plays.*

‖ *Diphilus was alſo a writer of the* New Comedy; *he wrote* 100 *plays, and ſome of theſe it is ſaid were copied by Plautus.*

reſemblance

resemblance to the *'Squire of Alsatia?* It was as well known to *Diphilus*, as it is to me.

But there remains a word to be said on some learned animadversions of your's, entitled *An Essay on the Theatre*, in which you profess to draw a *Comparison between Laughing* and *Sentimental Comedy*; and in which you are pleased evidently to point some observations at my comedy of the *Fashionable Lover:* You insinuate that every blockhead can write *Sentimental or pathetic Comedy*; that *Terence* appears to have made the *nearest approaches*, tho' without confounding the different provinces; and yet that he is reproached by *Cæsar* for wanting the *vis comica*; but *that all the other comic writers of antiquity* take the walk of ridicule, and cautiously avoid incroaching on the confines of tragedy; nay that *Terence* himself judiciously stops short before he comes to the * *downright* pathetic.

By this specimen of your acquaintance with the *comic writers of antiquity, most learned Sir*, I suspect that from the great attention you have bestowed upon the moderns, you have had little to spare to their predecessors; for if it is your opinion that *Terence* of all the ancient comic poets made the *nearest approaches* to the *pathetic*, I fear you will have an host of authorities to combat? § *Varro* decrees the province of the *Manners* to *Titinnius* and *Terence*; but that of the *Pathetic* to *Trabea*, *Attilius* and *Cæcilius:* You have here three comic poets of the Roman stage, all of which, according to the testimony of *Varro* the most learned of the Romans, *approached* nearer to the *pathetic* than *Terence*. But let us hear the opinion of *C. Cæsar* in this question, to whom you refer us, and tell us

* *Terence seems to have made the nearest Approaches, yet always judiciously stops short before he comes to the* downwright pathetic; *and yet he is even reproached by Cæsar for wanting the* Vis comica. *All the other comic writers of antiquity aim only at rendering folly or vice ridiculous, but never exalt their characters into buskin'd pomp, or make what Voltaire humorously calls a tradesman's tragedy.* ANONY.

§ To ethos *nulli alii servare convenit quam Titinnio et Terentio; Pathe vero Trabea et Attilius et Cæcilius facile moverant.* (Varr. de Lat. Sermone.)

that he *reproach'd Terence* for being deficient in the *vis comica*, and this no doubt becauſe he had ſuch leanings, ſuch *approaches to the pathetic:* The lines, which convey this *reproach* will be found below in the † note; they appear to me to be expreſſive of a moſt tender affection and reſpect to the memory of a favourite author; and I wiſh, *illuſtrious Sir*, you would think ſo well of them as to convey your *reproaches* in the like terms; my brethren would not complain, and I ſhould be a great gainer. But let us conſider theſe expreſſions of *Cæſar*'s; I do not diſcover any alluſion to the *pathetic:* He calls him *puri ſermonis amator*; and this indeed accords with § *Cicero*'s deſcription; but I am apt to think that neither in this expreſſion, nor in that of *Lenibus Scriptis* any reference is made to the *pathetic*, and I am ſtrengthened in this opinion by an obſervation of *Tanaquillus Faber* on this very paſſage: * *Cæſar thought* (ſays the commentator) *that Terence, in moving the paſſions, was inferior to ſome others, which indeed is the caſe; and Cæſar's opinion is confirmed by the decree of Varro, the moſt learned of the Romans.* This truly is to the point, if we are to credit the authority above-mentioned; and he proceeds to ſay, ‡ *Thus you ſee that nothing is left to Terence but The Manners: The Pathetic, which requires force and energy, eſpecially in the comic province, is aſcribed to others.* By this reference you ſee we have not only gained an authority for my interpretation of *Cæſar*'s words, but we have found a learned critic, who is

† *Tu quoque tu in ſummis, O dimidiate Menandĕr,*
Poneris, et meritò, puri ſermonis amator;
Lenibus atque utinam ſcriptis adjuncta foret Vis
Comica, *ut æquato virtus polleret honore*
Cum Græcis, neque in hâc deſpectus parte jaceres,
Unum hoc maceror et doleo tibi deeſſe, Terenti.

§ *Quidquid come loquens ac omnia dulcia dicens.*

* *Nempe hoc ſentiebat Terentium in movendis* pathesin *inferiorem quibuſdam poetis eſſe, quod profectò verum eſt, et judicium Cæſaris ſententiâ Varronis, qui Romanorum doctiſſimus fuit, confirmatur.*

‡ *Vides* to ethos *Terentio relictum, nil aliud:* To pathos, *quod vim et impetum poſtulat, præſertim in genere comico, aliis concedi.*

hardy

hardy enough to assert, that the *pathetic* is the very essence of the *vis comica*, or in other words, *requires force and energy, especially* in *the comic province*; the very opposite doctrine to what you, *most learned Sir*, have maintained.

So much for *Terence*; as for *all the other Comic Writers of antiquity*, I am at a loss to know whether you refer to the whole bulk of them in general, meaning all such of whose writings we have any fragments or descriptions; or whether you mean *all the others*, whose plays have come down to us entire; or in other words, *all the two*, viz. *Aristophanes* and *Plautus*—But we will take a short examination of the case.

If you mean to refer generally to the bulk of Greek and Roman writers of comedy, the question is in part answer'd by *Varro*, (as above quoted) who declares that *Trabea*, *Attilius* and *Cæcilius* excelled in *sentimental* or *pathetic* comedy: This will satisfy us as to the Roman stage; the Greek theatre, being original, was more various: Comedy took different characters at different periods: * *The Ancient Comedy* was personal and licentious, for then the government of *Athens* was democratical; *Aristophanes*, *Cratinus*, *Eupolis*, *Pherecrates*, and many others rank under this department; they lash'd the vices of mankind with singular severity; the generals, judges, treasurers, the people themselves, nay the most illustrious and most virtuous citizens were not exempt from their satire. Their invectives however were frequently resented; *Eupolis* in particular was cast into the sea and drowned, either because he had satyriz'd the *Baptæ*, in his comedy so call'd, or at the command of *Alcibiades*, whom he had lampooned. This circumstance and the transition of power from the people to the nobles introduced that species of comedy call'd † *The Middle*; of this sort we are told was the *Æoloscon* of *Aristophanes*, the *Ulysses* of *Cratinus*, and many others, which contain no personal invective, but have for the object of their

* *Vetus Comœdia.* † *Media.*

ridicule certain paſſages in, or alluſions to, the ancient poets, or parodies and traveſties upon the eminent *tragedies*; thus *Cratinus* in the comedy above-mentioned ridicules the *Odyſſey*, and thus the tranſition was made from perſon to performance, much to the advantage of ſociety: Your tranſitions, *learned Sir*, on the contrary, are often from perfo mance to perſon. This however is certain that the writers of the *ancient* or *middle comedy* made few, if any, *approaches* towards the *pathetic*, and ſo far your aſſertion is well founded.

But in the ‡ *new comedy*, of which *Menander* is at the head, the caſe is widely different; the Wits of *Athens* became exceedingly cautious how they indulged their vein for ſatire, leaſt by any means their invective might be applied to any of the *Macedonian* princes, late *Alexander*'s generals, of whoſe power they ſtood in extream awe. *Comedy* now aſſumed an aſpect entirely different; the fragments of *Menander*, *Philemon*, *Diphilus*, *Poſidippus*, ‖ *Apollodorus Gelous*, and others, conſiſt of moral ſententious paſſages, elegant in their phraſe, but grave, and many of them, eſpecially thoſe of *Diphilus*, of a religious caſt, as may be ſeen by refering to them.

Numberleſs quotations might be adduced to prove this to have been the character and complexion of the *new comedy* under *Menander* and his fraternity; *Quintilian* ſays of *Menander* that he is *omnibus rebus*, *perſonis*, affectubus *accommodatus*. † *Dion Chryſoſtom* ſpeaking of his ſtile, ſays it is *imitatio omnium morum et gratiarum*; and if we may credit * *Clemens Alexandrinus*, many *paſſages* in *Menander* are

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copied from the *Hebrew prophets:* And it is remarkable that such was the elegance and urbanity of the *Athenian comic poets* under this class, at least such it appear'd to *Cicero*, that he groups them with the *Socratic philosophers*. It will appear therefore that *sentiment* or the *pathetic* in comedy was not neglected by the ancients; that *Terence* so far from having made the *nearest approaches* to the *pathetic*, was accused of being deficient in it, and others for that very reason preferr'd before him, that with respect to *all the other comic writers of antiquity*; it cannot be asserted that *ridicule* was their sole aim; for tho' it may in general be so pronounced of the *ancient and middle comedy*, yet the writers of the *new comedy*, (who are by far the most numerous and most celebrated) come by no means under that description. As to the position that *they never exalt their characters into buskin'd pomp*, &c. the § prologue to the very first play in *Plautus*, *learned Sir*, well set you right in that particular; wherein *Mercury* announces not a *tradesman's tragedy* indeed, but a *tragi-comedy*.

And now, Sir, having addressed you under your general title, do not believe that I mean to mark you out by any particular one: Your correspondence with me, you well know, has always been *anonymous*, except in the case of one unhappy gentleman, and he has fled his country. As for you, Sir, wherever you inhabit, and whatever is your fortune, I bear you no ill-will; my character I will keep out of your reach, and for my writings I shall not much differ in opinion from you about them: If you pursue the same studies with me, good luck attend you; give your own works a good word, and be silent about mine; for if it shall please the Giver of my life to spare it, I hope soon to present to my countrymen something more worthy of their approbation, and less dependent upon your's. I am, &c. &c.

The Author.

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§ *Quid contraxistis frontem? quia tragœdiam*
Dixi futuram hanc? PLAUT. AMPH.

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Dixi futuram hanc? PLAUT. AMPH.

PROLOGUE.

By the AUTHOR of the COMEDY.

Spoken by Mr. SMITH.

IN Athens *once, as classic story runs,*
Thalia *number'd fifty living sons;*
But mark the waste of time's destructive hand,
One bard survives of all this numerous band;
Yet human genius seem'd as 'twou'd defy
Time's utmost rage by its variety,
For 'twas no wond'rous harvest, in those days,
From one rich stock to reap a hundred plays.
Ah! could we bring but one of these to light,
We'd give a hundred such as this to-night.
Rome *from her captive took the law she gave,*
And was at once her mistress and her slave;
Greece *from her fall immortal triumphs drew,*
And prov'd her tutelar Minerva *true:*
She, goddess-like, confiding in her charms,
To Mars *resign'd the barren toil of arms,*
Full well assur'd, when these vain toils were past,
That wit must triumph over strength at last;
Then smiling saw her Athens *meet its doom,*
And crown'd her in the theatres of Rome;
Nor murmur'd Rome *to see her* Terence *shod*
With the same sock in which Menander *trod,*
Nor Lælius *scorn'd, nor* Scipio *blush'd to sit,*
And join their plaudits to Athenian *wit.*
Micio's *mild virtue and mad* Demea's *rage,*
With bursts alternate shook the echoing stage;
And from these models 'tis your poet draws
His best, his only hope of your applause.
A tale it is to chace that angry spleen,
Which forms the mirth and moral of his scene;
A tale for noble and ignoble ear,
Something for fathers and for sons to hear:
And should you on your humbler bard bestow,
That grace which Rome *to her's was pleas'd to show,*
Advantage with the modern fairly lies,
Who, less deserving, gains as great a prize.

EPILOGUE.

By Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. ABINGTON.

AS I'm *an* Artiſt, *can my ſkill do better,*
Than paint your pictures? for I'm much your debtor:
I'll draw the out-lines—finiſh at my leiſure,
A groupe like you wou'd be a charming treaſure!
Here is my pencil, here my ſketching book,
Where for this work, I memorandums took;
I will in full, three quarters, and profile,
Take your ſweet faces, nay, your thoughts I'll ſteal;
From my good friends above, their wives and doxies,
Down to Madame, *and* Monſieur, *in the boxes:*
Now for it, Sirs!—I beg from top to bottom,
You'll keep your features fix'd 'till I have got 'em.
Firſt for Fine Gentlemen *my fancy ſtretches—*
They'll be more like, the ſlighter are the ſketches:
Such unembodied form invention racks;
Pale cheeks, dead eyes, thin bodies, and long backs;
They would be beſt in ſhades, or virgin wax.
To make Fine Ladies *like, the toil is vain,*
Unleſs I paint 'em o'er and o'er again:
In froſt, tho' not a flower, its charms diſcloſes,
They *can, like hot-houſes, produce their roſes.*
At you, Coquettes, *my pencil now takes aim!*
In love's Change-Alley playing all the game;
I'll paint you ducklings *waddling out quite lame.*
The Prude's *moſt virtuous ſpite, I'll next pourtray;*
Railing at gaming—loving private play.
Quitting the gay bon-ton, *and wou'd be witty,*
I come to you, my Patrons, *in the* city:
I like your honeſt, open, Engliſh *looks;*
They ſhow too—that you well employ your cooks!
Have at you now—Nay, Miſter—pray don't ſtir,
Hold up your head, your fat becomes you, Sir;
Leer with your eyes—as thus—now ſmirk—well done!
You're ogling, Sir—a haunch of veniſon.
Some of you fickle Patriots *I ſhall paſs,*
Such brittle beings, will be beſt on glaſs.

Now

EPILOGUE.

Now Courtiers *you--looks meant your thoughts to ſmother;*
Hands *fixt on one thing*—eyes *upon another;*
For Politicians, *I have no dark tints,*
Such clouded brows are fine for wooden prints.
To diſtant climes if modern Jaſons *roam,*
And bring the Golden Fleece with curſes home,
I'll blacken them with Indian *ink—but then*
My hands, like theirs, will ne'er be clean again.
Though laſt, not leaſt in love, I come to * YOU!
And 'tis with rapture, nature's ſons I view;
With warmeſt tints ſhall glow your jolly faces,
Joy, love, and laughter, there have fix'd their places,
Free from weak nerves, bon-ton, ennui, and foreign graces.
I'll tire you now no more with pencil ſtrictures;
I'll copy theſe—next week ſend home your pictures.

* To the Galleries.

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Andrew Nightſhade,	— Mr. KING,
Manlove,	— Mr. AICKIN,
Stapleton,	— Mr. PACKER,
Charles Manlove,	— Mr. REDDISH,
Jack Nightſhade,	— Mr. WESTON,
Dibble,	— Mr. BADDELEY,
Gregory,	— Mr. MOODY,
Frampton,	— Mr. WALDRON,
Frederick,	— Mr. WRIGHT.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Stapelton,	— Mrs. HOPKINS,
Lætitia,	— Mrs. ABINGTON.
Lucy,	— Miſs POPE,

THE CHOLERIC MAN.

ACT I.

SCENE I. MANLOVE's *Chambers.*

(FRAMPTON *at his deſk*; MANLOVE *enters as from his walk*; FRAMPT. *riſes and meets him with ſome papers.*)

FRAMPTON.

YOU have lengthen'd your walk this morning.

MANLOVE.

Very likely: The gardens were pleaſant, and I believe I have rather exceeded my uſual ſtint.

FRAMPTON.

By juſt one turn upon the terrace.

MANLOVE.

You meaſur'd me, I ſee: We men of buſineſs, Frampton, contract ſtrange habits of regularity.

FRAMPTON.

And bachelors too, Sir.

MANLOVE.

Very true, very true: A wife now and then does put a man a little out of method, I have heard. Is any body waiting?

FRAMPTON.

No body.

MANLOVE.

Any caſes?

FRAMPTON.

Several. (*Gives him papers.*

MANLOVE.

Bleſs me! was the world of my mind, they would patch up their differences over a bottle, and let the graſs grow in our Inns of court. Let me ſee—what have we got here?—(reads)—*A deteſts B plucking turnips out of his field*, &c.—Here's a fellow for you, he'll go to law with the Crows for picking worms out of his dunghill: Proſecute a fellow-creature for a turnip? A turnip be his damages!

FRAMPTON.

And his food too, at leaſt till he's a better man.

MANLOVE.

Nicholas Swanſkin, taylor, in Threadneedle Street, would be glad to know how to proceed in a legal way againſt his wife, in a caſe of cohabitancy——Had you any fee with this caſe?

FRAMPTON.

A light guinea, Sir.

MANLOVE.

'Tis more than a light woman deſerves: Give the taylor his guinea again; bid him proceed to his work, and leave a good-for-nothing wife to go on with her's; and hark'ee, Frampton, you ſeem to want a new coat, ſuppoſe you let him take your meaſure; the fellow, you ſee, would fain be cutting out work for the lawyers. Send Mr. Dibble hither. Oh, he is come.

(DIBBLE *enters with papers.* FRAMPTON *retires to his deſk.*)

Mr. Dibble, have you got Miſs Fairfax's papers?

DIBBLE.

They are in my hand, Sir.

MANLOVE.

Have you copied my opinion upon the will?

DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

It is ready for ſigning.

(Dibble gives him a pen, and Manlove ſigns a paper.

MANLOVE.

There, Sir. You've compar'd it, no doubt: Put the papers under one encloſure, and carry them to Miſs Fairfax's; make my reſpects, and ſay I will have the honour of waiting on her this forenoon, and ſtating ſome particulars in my opinion that may want explaining.

DIBBLE.

I ſhall, Sir. *(Goes to the table and puts up the papers.*

MANLOVE.

Are you ready, Frampton? you and I muſt ſtep to the hall. How we appear to that ſpruce gentleman! His father wore a livery; his ſiſter is waiting-woman to Miſs Fairfax, the very lady he is going to in that monkey habit: Is there no perſuading him to ſuit his dreſs to his condition? Believe me, Frampton, there is much good ſenſe in old diſtinctions: When the law lays down its full-bottom'd perriwig, you will find leſs wiſdom in bald pates than you are aware of. *(Exeunt.*

DIBBLE. *(Alone.*

What a damn'd queer figure old Frampton makes of himſelf? I muſt never ſhow him at our Sunday's club, never. The Counſellor's little better: It does well enough for chamber practice, but he cou'dn't walk the hall in that wig: It's nothing now unleſs a good club of hair peeps under the tye: I hope ſhortly to ſee the day when Weſtminſter-hall ſhall be able to count cues with the Parade.—*(He ſits down. A knocking at the door.)*—Who's at the door? Come in: You expect now I ſhould riſe and open it: Not I, in faith, do that office for yourſelf, or ſtay where you are.—Ah, Gregory, is it you! what wind blew you hither? what witch brought you at her back?

SCENE II.

Enter GREGORY.

GREGORY.

No witch, but an old bone-ſetting mare, with a heavy cloak-bag at her crupper, that has play'd a bitter tune upon my ribs. Where's his honour, Maſter Dibble?

DIBBLE.

Out. Give me hold of thy hand, old boy. What's the beſt news in your parts? Hav'n't earth'd old Surly-Boots yet?

GREGORY.

Earth'd him! no ſuch luck; he's a tough morſel. He's above ground, as my head can teſtify.

(Shows his ſcull.

DIBBLE.

Why that's action and battery with a vengeance.

GREGORY.

Battery! he knows the ſtrength of my ſcull, as well as a ſand-man knows the back of his aſs, and cudgels it as often: But he's hard at hand—When will his honour, Manlove, be at home?

DIBBLE.

Preſently, preſently. What brings your old blade hither?

GREGORY.

The old errand: a little bit of law; a ſmall jig to the tune of John Doe and Richard Roe; that's all.

DIBBLE.

Plaintiff, I bet five to one. But how does my playmate, Jack? how fares it with young Hopeful?

GREGORY.

Gads-my-life; well remember'd! here's a writing for you: 'Tis a mercileſs ſcrawl to be ſure; he's not at all come on in his running-hand, not at all; no, tho' I talk to him, and talk to him, and tell him what a fine young man his brother Charles is here, Mr. Manlove I muſt call him now; for his honour,

I am

I am told, ſince his return from travel, has nominated him afreſh after himſelf, hasn't he, Maſter Dibble?

DIBBLE.

Ay, ay; 'twas done laſt ſeſſions; he's no longer Charles Nightſhade, but Charles Manlove, Eſq. and a brave eſtate he's got by the exchange.

GREGORY.

All theſe things I ding into the ears of our young ſcape-grace, Jack; but I might as well whiſtle the birds from the ſky, as talk him out of his tricks; mobbing with the carter-fellows, and ſcampering after the maids: All the while too the arch knave contrives to blind the eyes of old Choleric, his father, ſitting as demure as a cat, till he is fairly in for his evening's nap, then away goes he, like hey-go-mad, all the pariſh over. Well, have you made out his letter?

DIBBLE.

I'll attempt to read it to you.

Dear Pickle,

Old Choleric is ſetting off for London, and thinks to leave me in the country, but it won't do: Muſt have another bruſh with the lads at the Bear: intend to be at brother Charles's on Wedneſday at noon, where you'll meet me. Old Truſty carries this, and underſtands trap: Mum's the word. Thine,

JOHN NIGHTSHADE.

So you are privy to this trip, Gregory.

GREGORY.

To be ſure, Maſter Dibble; we are all of his ſide: There is not a ſervant wou'd peach, if he was to commit murder amongſt 'em.

DIBBLE.

Indeed! But hold, here is more over the leaf. *Gregory ſays I was of age laſt Lammas, if you know of ever a clean tight wench, that will take me out of old Choleric's clutches, I don't care if I buckle too for life.* N. B. *She muſt have the Spaniſh, or the bait won't take.*

So,

So, ſo! he's for a wife you ſee: Has he ever talk'd to you in this ſtrain?

GREGORY.

Now and then, but I always tell him 'tis time to think of marrying when the old badger is in the earth.

DIBBLE.

Pooh! you're to blame: We'll make a man of him; we'll ſet him up with a wife. I have a girl in my eye; a friend of my own—provided you will bear a hand in the buſineſs.

GREGORY.

Bear a hand, Maſter Dibble! You are a lawyer and can take care of yourſelf, I'm a poor ſervant and have a character to loſe.

DIBBLE.

Well, well; but if I pay you for your character, and your ſervice into the bargain; every thing has its price you know.

GREGORY.

To be ſure, there's no denying that: But, hark! here comes his honour Manlove.

DIBBLE.

Enough—Where are you lodg'd?

GREGORY.

At Mr. Stapleton's, in New Broad-Street: I'm going thither after I've ſeen the counſellor.

DIBBLE.

Better and better ſtill: I'm going thither too, and will wait for you below in the ſquare: we can diſcuſs my ſcheme by the way. [*Exit.*

GREGORY.

What a ſharp bitten vermin it is! Ah! theſe lawyers have all their wits about 'em.

SCENE III.

MANLOVE *and* GREGORY.

MANLOVE.

What, Gregory! and without thy maſter? Where's my brother Nightſhade? Thou and he are ſeldom parted, I believe.

GRE-

GREGORY.

Troth, Sir, I hope heaven will take ſome conſideration of that, and ſet off the ſins of my youth againſt the ſufferings of my old age. The 'Squire is at hand.

MANLOVE.

Well, and what buſineſs calls him up to town?

GREGORY.

Pleaſe your honour he is fallen out with our parſon.

MANLOVE.

About tythes?

GREGORY.

Lack-a-day! he has been non-ſuited upon that ſcore over and over—'Tis about game.

MANLOVE.

Game, quotha! if he comes to talk to me about hares and partridges, Gregory, I won't hear of it: Such laws, and ſuch law-ſuits are the diſgrace of the country—I won't hear a word upon the ſubject.

GREGORY.

It's quite a breach; he has totally left off going to church himſelf, and forbade all his family; nay, what's more, he has broke his back-gammon tables, only becauſe the parſon taught him the game. Mercy o' me, that ever your honour and my old maſter ſhou'd be born of the ſame mother.

MANLOVE.

Of the ſame mother, but very different fathers, Gregory: Doom'd from early youth to a life merely mercantile, his days have been paſs'd between a compting-houſe at Rotterdam, and the cabbin of a Dutch dogger; precious univerſities! One ſon, indeed, he allow'd me to reſcue from his hands, and to him I have given a public education; the other poor lad has been a bird of his own breeding.

GREGORY.

And a precious bird he is! ſuch another lapwing! ſkitting here, and ſkitting there; ſometimes above, ſometimes below: No wonder he's ſo wild when his

ſchooling

ſchooling has been under the hedges; but I hear my old maſter on the ſtairs. Good morning to your honour—I muſt budge onwards to Mr. Stapleton's.

[*Exit.*

MANLOVE.

Gregory, good morning.

SCENE IV.

Enter NIGHTSHADE.

NIGHTSHADE *(ſpeaks as he enters.)*

I tell you, fellow, there's your fare: I'll not give you a farthing over. A hard ſhilling indeed! a hard coach if you pleaſe!—Brother Manlove, your ſervant! This town grows worſe and worſe; no conſcience, no police—If I was not the moſt patient man alive, ſuch things would turn my brain—Brother Manlove, I ſay, your ſervant.

MANLOVE.

Brother Andrew, you are welcome. You ſeem'd a little ruffled, ſo I waited for its ſubſiding, and now give me your hand: I am glad to ſee you in town, provided the occaſion be agreeable.

NIGHTSHADE.

I think the law has a proviſo for every thing: Your compliment ſets off, like the preamble of a ſtatute, and your concluſion limps after like the clauſe at the tail of it. So you keep your old apartments, and as ſlovenly as ever—Lincoln's-Inn and the law—ſo runs your life. A turn upon the Terrace after breakfaſt, a mutton chop for dinner at the Rolls, and the evening papers at the Mount, wind up your day.

MANLOVE.

A narrow ſcale, I own; but whether it be that I was made too ſmall for grandeur, or grandeur be too ſmall for happineſs, I never could entertain both gueſts together, ſo I took the humbleſt of the two, and left the other for my betters.

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Ay, 'tis too late to alter; 'twou'd be a vain endeavour to correct your temper at theſe years—By the way, brother, your ſtair-caſe is the dirtieſt I ever ſate my foot upon.

MANLOVE.

So long as we have clean dealings within, our cliants will make no complaint. Your's, I warrant, was neater at Rotterdam?

NIGHTSHADE.

Neater! 'tis matter of aſtoniſhment to me, how you that have a plentiful eſtate, can make yourſelf a ſlave to buſineſs, and drudge away your life in ſuch a hole as this!

MANLOVE.

True, Andrew, 'twas unreaſonable; but as I have now made over the beſt part of my eſtate to your ſon, ſo I think I have anſwered the beſt part of your objection.

NIGHTSHADE.

You ſhall excuſe me, all the world cries out upon your folly; you are apt to be a little haſty, elſe I ſhould be free to tell you, you have made yourſelf ridiculous; and what is worſe, Brother Charles, I ſpeak to you as a father, you have undone my ſon.

MANLOVE.

How ſo? have I confin'd him in his education?

NIGHTSHADE.

No, faith; the ſcale on which you've finiſh'd him is wide enough to take in vice and folly at full ſize; his principles won't cramp their growth. At ſchool he was grounded in impudence, the Univerſity confirm'd him in ignorance, and the grand tour ſtock'd him with infidelity and bad pictures—ſuch has been his education.

MANLOVE.

But you, in your wiſdom, purſued a different courſe with your younger ſon.

NIGHTSHADE.

I bred him as a rational creature ſhould be bred, under the rod of diſcipline, under the laſh of my own arm; I gave him a ſober, frugal, godly training; and mark the difference between us—Your fellow lives here in this great city, in a round of pleaſures, in the front of the faſhion, ſquandering and revelling: —Mine abides patiently in the country, toiling and travailing; early at his duty, ſparing at his meals, patient of fatigue; he hears no muſic as Charles does, purchaſes no fine pictures, lolls in no fine chariot, befools himſelf with no fine women; no, thank my ſtars, I've reſcued one of my boys; Jack at leaſt treads in the ſteps of his father.

MANLOVE.

I hope he will; better principles I cannot wiſh him; but methinks, Andrew, a little more knowledge of the world——

NIGHTSHADE.

Knowledge of the world, Brother Charles! who knows ſo much? Belike you never heard then I had made three trips to Shetland, in a herring-buſs, before you was born? have been three times charter'd to Statia for muſcovadoes; twice to Zante for currants, and made one voyage to Bencoolen for pepper.

MANLOVE.

Yes, and that pepper-voyage runs in your blood ſtill.

NIGHTSHADE.

So much the better; it will preſerve my wits, it will ſeaſon my underſtanding from ſuch flyblown folly as your's. Zooks! you to talk of knowledge of the world! where ſhould you come by it? upon Clapham-Common? upon Banſted-Downs? Did you ever ſee the pike of Teneriffe, the rock of Gibraltar, or even the Biſhop and his Clerks? I know 'em all, your charts, and your coaſting-pilots; I have been two nights and a day upon a ſandbank in the Grecian Iſlands;

Iſlands; and do you talk to me of knowledge of the world?

MANLOVE.

Let us change the ſubject then—you have not told me what brings you out of the country.

NIGHTSHADE.

Becauſe there's no abiding in it; what with refractory tenants, poaching parſons, encloſing 'ſquires, navigation ſchemes, and turnpike meetings, there's no keeping peace about me; no, tho' I've commenc'd fourteen ſuits at law, beſides bye-battles at quarter-ſeſſions, courts leet, and courts baron, innumerable.

MANLOVE.

Indeed!

NIGHTSHADE.

No ſooner do I put my head out of doors, but inſtantly ſome fellow meets me with a fowling piece on his ſhoulder, or a fiſhing-rod in his hand, or a greyhound at his horſe's heels, and all to diſturb and deſtroy my property.

MANLOVE.

I ſay property! let your game look after themſelves. Do you call a creature property, that lights upon my lands to-day, upon your's to-morrow, and the next perhaps in Norway? I reprobate all quarrels about guns, and dogs, and game; for my part I am pleas'd to ſee an Engliſhman with arms, whether he bears 'em for his own amuſement, or for my defence.

NIGHTSHADE.

'Tis mighty well! I am a fool to waſte my time with you; I ſhall look after my own game, in my own way; you may watch yours, the ſparrows here in the garden, or the old duck in the fountain in the ſquare; your ſcience goes no farther, ſo your ſervant; if you want me, I ſhall be found at Mr. Stapleton's, in New Broad-ſtreet.

MANLOVE.

Hold, hold, I'm going there; I've buſineſs at Mr. Stapleton's; my chariot's at the door—I'll carry you. Who waits? (*Enter Servant*) Here, take this note to Mr. Manlove.

NIGHTSHADE.

Ay, that's your puppy; my name wasn't good enough it ſeems; but poſitively I'll not ſee him; if you bring him to me 'tis all in vain; I poſitively will not bear him in my preſence. [*Exit.*

MANLOVE.

That ever ſuch a monſter ſhould exiſt, as an unnatural father! [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *An Apartment in Charles Manlove's Houſe.*

Enter C. MANLOVE, *and* FREDERICK *his Servant.*

C. MANLOVE.

Mr. Manlove dines with me to-day; lay two covers in the little parlour, and bid the cook be punctual to his hour.

FREDERICK.

To a minute, Sir. If Mr. Manlove dines here, dinner will be ſerv'd preciſely as the clock is ſtriking.

C. MANLOVE.

Set out the dumb waiter, and tell the men they need not attend. (*Frederick goes and ſpeaks at the door.*) Sir, you cannot come in; my maſter is not to be ſpoken with: Where are you puſhing?

C. MANLOVE.

What's the matter, Frederick?

FREDERICK.

A country-like fellow ſays he muſt be admitted to ſpeak with you in private; he will not be kept out.

(*Pulls the door to, and enters.*

C. MANLOVE.

And why ſhou'd he?

FREDERICK

FREDERICK.

I don't know; I cannot ſay I like his looks; I never ſaw a more ſuſpicious perſon.

C. MANLOVE.

Well, let him in, however.

FREDERICK *opens the door and* JACK *enters.*

FREDERICK.

He has the true Tyburn marks about him. (*aſide*)

CHARLES.

Brother!

FREDERICK.

Gad ſo, I'm wrong; I'll e'en make off. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI.

CHA. MANLOVE, *and* JACK NIGHTSHADE.

JACK.

Huſh! huſh! don't blow me; ſnug's the word; cloſe, cloſe, and under the wind.

CHARLES.

I proteſt I ſcarce knew you, Jack; what brings you to town?

JACK.

Six hours, and as bright a gelding as ever was lapt in leather.

CHARLES.

But what's your buſineſs? did your father ſend you up?

JACK.

He ſend me up! where have you liv'd to aſk the queſtion? No, he has brought himſelf hither, and I ſtole a march after him: A freak; a frolick, that's all. Didlikins! what a flaming houſe you live in! Oh, I give you joy, brother; Uncle Manlove has clapt a new name upon you. Old Surly knows nothing of this trip. I had much ado to get to the ſpeech of you: You've a mortal parcel of fine fellows below in your hall. But you are not angry at my coming? You'll not peach, I hope?

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Honour forbid! Thy lot, my dear boy, has been ſevere enough.

JACK.

Severe! there's been no ſcarcity of that, I warrant you; there's not a crab-ſtock in the neighbourhood, but what my ſhoulders have had a taſte of it's fruit. Oh, you've a rare lot, Charles! a happy rogue! Look at me—Who wou'd think you and I were whelps of the ſame breed? You are as ſleek as my lady's lap-dog; I am rough as a water-ſpaniel; be-daggled and be-mir'd, as if I had come out of the fens with wild fowl: Why I have brought off as much ſoil upon my boots only, as wou'd ſet up a Norfolk farmer.

CHARLES.

Well, well, Jack, we'll ſoon get thee into better trim.

JACK.

Then you muſt thruſt me into a caſe of your own, for I've no more coats than ſkins: Father, to be ſure, keeps it well duſted; but methinks I ſhou'd be ſtrangely glad to ſee myſelf a gentleman for one hour or two.

CHARLES.

What can I do for you? your father you ſay is in town; a diſcovery wou'd be fatal: Do you know where he is lodg'd?

JACK.

Not I truly; but my amuſements lead to places, where I ſhou'd be ſure not to meet him: Only one night, dear Charles, and I'll be back again in the country; think what a life mine is; compare it with your own, and I'm ſure you won't grudge me one day's frolick and away.

CHARLES.

I grudge you! no—I wiſh you cou'd enjoy a brother's ſhare in all my happineſs, in all my fortune: Submit, however, to the neceſſity of your affairs with

with a good grace; humour the peculiarities of your father, and command me upon all worthy occaſions.

JACK.

Why that's hearty, that's friendly now. Give me hold of your hand. Boddikins, I was afraid you wou'd have turn'd your back on me, now you have jump'd into ſuch a fortune, but I ſee you are as honeſt a lad as ever: By the way, Father was in a damn'd hue at your changing your name—fierce as a panther; no man dare enter his den. But you ſay you'll rigg me out for a day; give me a good launch, Charles, and I warrant I'll find a harbour.

CHARLES.

There's my purſe, Jack; it contains enough to ſpend, and ſome to throw away: Frederick commands the wardrobe; if you find any thing to your mind, take it; if not, convene my taylor, he'll equip you in an inſtant: Follow your propenſities, but take a little diſcretion to your aid; your nature has not had much pruning, and 'till experience ſhall have clear'd the path of life, pleaſure may be apt to ſpread ſome ſnares in your way that may coſt you ſorrow to eſcape from.

JACK.

Humph! in all twenty and five guineas—What was you ſaying laſt, brother?

CHARLES.

Only throwing away a little good advice upon you, Jack; that's all.

JACK.

I thank you; I have a pretty conſiderable ſtock of that upon my hands already; one good thing at a time. *(Looking at the money.)* How much of this money muſt you take back again?

CHARLES.

'Tis all at your ſervice; and more if your occaſions require it.

JACK.

JACK.

Are you ſerious? Is it poſſible? 'Sbud! I don't know, I can't tell what I ſhould do in your caſe, but I'm afraid I cou'd never have the heart to give you as much. Drown it! what pity 'tis that old Cruſty hadn't ſome of your ſpirit. May I ſpend it all, and won't you require an account of it?

CHARLES.

Not unleſs you chuſe to give it me.

JACK.

Give me a kiſs, give me a kiſs, my dear, dear brother! enjoy your good fortune and welcome. I perceive a man hasn't half ſo much envy in his heart, when his pocket's full of money. Come; I'll go change my dreſs. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Stapleton's Houſe.*

(STAPLETON *enters to his wife and* LÆTITIA, *who are diſcovered at breakfaſt.*)

STAPLETON.

A Merchant's wife, and not breakfaſted before ten! fye upon you, Dolly; theſe are new faſhions, theſe are courtly cuſtoms; let us ſtick to the city, and the old city hours. And this idle jade, Lætitia, loves her pillow better than ſhe does her prayers. Come, come, away with your crockery: Old Andrew Nightſhade will be with you before you are aware.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

There is another room ready for his reception. I am afraid my dear huſband will find this old man's peeviſh-

peeviſhneſs more than even his good nature can put up with.

STAPLETON.

Why hav'n't you kept my patience then in better exerciſe? but never fear. Lætitia you are to have a viſit from Counſellor Manlove this morning: Have you peruſed the papers he ſent you?

LÆTITIA.

I have.

STAPLETON.

And what do they tell you?

LÆTITIA.

What I can truly teſtify, that Mr. Stapleton has been the beſt of guardians.

STAPLETON.

I ſay the beſt! half the trading world wou'd call me a very bad one; when you come to ſum up the accounts of your education, Huſſy, I expect you will file a bill againſt me for waſte and embezzlement.

LÆTITIA.

For miſapplication perhaps; the only objectionable part of your accounts will be the ſubject of them.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

For ſhame, Lætitia Fairfax; you well know you've been the pride and pleaſure of our lives.

STAPLETON.

When ſhe was my ward, ſhe dare not make ſo free with herſelf; now ſhe is her own miſtreſs, ſhe muſt do as ſhe will: My authority is expired.

LÆTITIA.

Rather reviv'd in ſo much fuller force, by how much more I'm bound to you by love, than law.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mr. Nightſhade is below, Sir; Counſellor Manlove to wait upon Miſs Fairfax.

LÆTITIA.

Where have you ſhewn him?

SERVANT.

He is in the drawing-room.

LÆTITIA.

I'll wait on him directly. [*Exit Ser.*

STAPLETON.

A word before we part. Mr. Manlove will inform you of certain reſtrictions you are under, by your good father's will, in the article of marriage: If the ſubject ſhou'd lead him, as poſſibly it may, to name his nephew Charles to you; in truth, my dear Lætitia, I do not know, in all this town, a young man of whom report ſpeaks ſo advantagiouſly.

LÆTITIA.

Mr. Manlove's buſineſs with me is of a very different ſort.

STAPLETON.

Perhaps not; therefore remember what I ſay.

LÆTITIA.

I never can forget the reſpect that is due to your opinion. [*Exit.*

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Have you any reaſon to think Mr. Manlove means to propoſe for his nephew?

STAPLETON.

I'll tell you more of that hereafter; we muſt now welcome old Nightſhade with as good a grace as we can: He is an honeſt man, tho' a humourſome one, and was for many years a very ſteady correſpondent of mine at Rotterdam. We merchants muſt not overlook our friends, whatever our betters may think fit to do. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *Charles Manlove's Houſe.*

JACK NIGHTSHADE *enters, finely apparell'd, in a ſuit of his brother's, followed by* DIBBLE.

JACK.

Come along, Dibble, come along—Dear, lovely and delicious lady fortune, who haſt put clothes upon my

my back, and cash into my pocket! thou know'st I never slander'd thee, never call'd thee jilt or gypsey, when I've seen thee perch'd upon thy wheel, and feeding fools by handfuls; give me now the rest of thy blessings, love, pleasure, and good fellowship! May the lads I am to meet be frolicksome, and the lasses free! and never let my poor little defenceless wherry come athwart that old Dutch dogger, my father, till it's safe in harbour, and all hands ashore.

DIBBLE.

Well said, 'Squire, where in the name of wonder did you find this rhapsody?

JACK.

Why, did you never see the picture of fortune, mounted on a wheel with a bandage over her eyes, tossing money to the mob, like a parliament man? Gregory has the print in his pantry, you may buy the whole moral for a penny.

DIBBLE.

I protest, Jack, you are not only grown a beau in your brother's fine clothes, but a wit into the bargain.

JACK.

Pshaw! I am merry enough when my belly's full, and father asleep; but what signifies a poor fellow's being witty, when there's nobody to laugh at his jokes? 'Tis the money in my pocket, Dibble, not the clothes on my back makes me a wit; and when the wine mounts into my noddle, I shall be wittier still.

DIBBLE.

Time will shew; but hark'ee, 'Squire Jack, before you pass yourself off for a man of fashion, shou'dn't you practice the carriage and conceits of one?

JACK.

I shall be glad to learn.

DIBBLE.

Be ruled by me; I will give you a few lessons shall set you up for a fine gentleman in a minute.

Look at me—that's well. Stare me full in the face—Ay, that will do—you've impudence enough for the character, that's a main point gain'd—now walk acroſs the room.

JACK.

Walk! why that's eaſy enough I hope.

DIBBLE.

Hold, not ſo faſt; there you are out—walk trippingly thus, dy'e ſee, with a lazy loitering air, not a league at a ſtride, with your head playing like the pole of a coach, ſo *(mimicking.)* When you enter a room, take no notice of any body in it; make your way ſtrait to the chimney, turn your back to the fire, pull away the flaps of your clothes, and diſplay your perſon to the ladies who are ſitting round it; when their teeth begin to chatter with the cold, throw yourſelf careleſly into a chair, tuck your hands into your muff, and never open your lips for the reſt of the afternoon---'twill gain reſpect in every houſe you enter.

JACK.

Well, well, Dibble, this is all eaſy enough: I ſhall be moſt at a loſs for the lingo—what wou'd your worſhip have me ſay when I'm amongſt my betters?

DIBBLE.

Nothing, I tell you.

JACK.

Nothing! how the duce then ſhall I ſhew my wit?

DIBBLE.

By holding your tongue; never ſpeak yourſelf, nor ſmile at any thing ſpoken by another; reſerve your wit for your creditors, they'll keep it in exerciſe; not but what there are other occaſions for a man of faſhion to ſhew his parts; as for inſtance, with a woman of modeſty you may be witty at the expence of her bluſhes, or with a parſon at the expence of his profeſſion; theſe are cheap methods, be at no pains in the account, decency and religion will pay all coſts, and you'll be clear of the courts.

JACK.

JACK.

You need not tell me that; why I've play'd a thouſand tricks upon our vicar, and as for modeſt women as you call 'em, I don't know much of them; but I know my tongue runs faſt enough when I'm amongſt the maids, I can ſet the whole kitchen in a roar—But come, let's ſally: Now do you mind, Dibble, don't you be calling me 'Squire, and 'Squire Jack, and Jack Nightſhade; but let it be Sir, and your honour, and all that.

DIBBLE.

Truſt to me for ſetting you off in thoſe fine clothes—let me ſee—what ſhall I ſay you are?

JACK.

Say I'm a young Weſt Indian juſt come to my canes.

DIBBLE.

Ay, or a young nobleman juſt ſucceeded to your honours—'twill account for your want of education.

JACK.

No, hang it, a better thought ſtrikes me—call me Mr. Manlove.

DIBBLE.

Mr. Manlove! why do you take your brother's name?

JACK.

For the ſame reaſon I take his clothes—becauſe it fits me: If I leave him the eſtate that came with it, why mayn't I change names as well as he?

DIBBLE.

Becauſe he chang'd by act of parliament, and you by act of your own.

JACK.

Act of parliament! egad they'll change people's ſexes by-and-by; why they'll turn a wife into a maid by act of parliament as readily as a common into an encloſure.

DIB-

DIBBLE.

Yes, but it generally remains common for the life of the proprietor.

JACK.

Nan!—How muſt I carry my hat, Dibble? thus, under my arm? This damn'd barber has thruſt his black ſkewers thro' my ears.—Look out and tell me if the man has call'd a coach.

DIBBLE.

'Tis waiting, Sir.

JACK.

A plague upon this ſpit! 'tis as heavy as a fowling pouch, and jingles like a pair of dog-couples; an oak-ſtick is worth two of it. Have you caution'd the ſervants about my name?

DIBBLE.

'Tis done, your honour.

JACK.

'Tis done, your honour—your honour is obeyed: Come along, Dibble, let honour go before, and law follow after.

DIBBLE.

Ay, but when law is at your heels, have a care it does not overtake you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Enter MANLOVE, *and* CHARLES.

MANLOVE.

Her mother was a Sedley, of a reſpectable family, and an accompliſh'd lady; her father was a trader of fair character and principal in the houſe now conducted with ſuch credit by her guardian Stapleton; her fortune is conſiderable; I mention that to you, as I think any great diſproportion on either ſide in that particular is to be avoided.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Equal alliances to be ſure are beſt.

MANLOVE.

And this would be of all moſt equal, for I verily think you have not a virtue, of which Miſs Fairfax does not poſſeſs the counterpart: By the way, Charles, you will not like her the worſe for being no inconſiderable proficient in your favourite art, painting.

CHARLES.

I have heard her performance very highly commended: Your report makes me ambitious of being known to her; and ſo, my dear Sir, I promiſe you, in the words of your favourite poet,

I'll look to like, if looking liking move.

I'll take my heart to counſel, for I know you aſk no ſacrifice.

MANLOVE.

No, Charles, 'twas to make you free, not to rob you of your freedom, that I gave you a fortune; if I throw your inclination into fetters, 'twill be poor ſatisfaction that I gilt them over afterwards,

CHARLES.

In that aſſurance I will proceed in this affair after my own humour; for as I wiſh to have an opportunity of ſeeing this fair paintreſs in her natural colours, I muſt deviſe ſome method of converſing with her at my eaſe.

MANLOVE.

At your eaſe? what prevents you?

CHARLES.

The declaration you made to her this morning; I dread the artificial graces which young women are too apt to put on, when they act under obſervation; ſo quiet, ſo chaſtis'd, ſo infinitely obliging: We think 'em meak as lambs; marry 'em, and they change to mountain-cats. Such women remind me of decay'd ſhips newly painted; the outſide is inviting; embark, and they conduct you to your grave.

MAN-

MANLOVE.

Well, Charles, if you embark your hopes upon this venture, I think I may enſure your happineſs, though the voyage is for life.

CHARLES.

Where can I find a better policy? However, if I could meet her without her knowing me—in the way of her art now, can you tell me, is ſhe viſited by our beſt maſters?

MANLOVE.

By all; foreigners as well as natives; there is no fame without her approbation; not a grace is ſtampt without her fiat.

CHARLES.

Under favour, are not theſe extraordinary accompliſhments to acquire in the family of a trader?

MANLOVE.

Not at all; beware how you apply French ideas to Engliſh merchants: Where nature beſtows genius, education will give accompliſhments; but where the diſpoſition is wanting, the blood of a Ducheſs cannot make a gentlewoman.

CHARLES.

Was ſhe ever out of England?

MANLOVE.

I have been told ſhe was near two years in Italy with a family of diſtinction.

CHARLES.

It is enough; I have my cue: I think I ſhall fall upon a method of introducing myſelf to her acquaintance without a diſcovery. I can paſs examination in the art of painting very tolerably.

MANLOVE.

Take your own courſe; I have no right to adviſe; I am poor authority in affairs of love. Good afternoon to you. Nay, Charles, no ceremony; I thought we had agreed on that. Your ſervant. [*Exit.*

CHARLES.

Your moſt obedient—Here, who waits?

Enter

Enter FREDERICK.

Frederick, look out my travelling frock, you know which I mean.

FREDERICK.

The ſuit you had made at Lyons.

CHARLES.

No, 'twas at Milan: The green camblet: Bring it to me in the dreſſing-room. Make haſte.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE IV.

NIGHTSHADE, *followed by* FRAMPTON.

NIGHTSHADE.

Come along, Mr. What's-your-name: Enter without more ceremony I beſeech you—An old formal blockhead!

FRAMPTON.

I attend you, Sir, by order of Mr. Manlove, touching a caſe wherein you have conſulted him.

NIGHTSHADE.

That's true, that's true; it is the pigeon-houſe caſe—I gave it him this morning: Is it uſual for you lawyers to be ſo nimble with your anſwers?

FRAMPTON.

It is not unuſual with Mr. Manlove.

NIGHTSHADE.

Well, and what thinks he of the caſe?

FRAMPTON.

The caſe is a clear caſe.

NIGHTSHADE.

I am glad to hear it heartily.

FRAMPTON.

In other words, it is a caſe clear to be apprehended: It hath reference to a pigeon-houſe, built and erected in a certain field, commonly known by the name of the Vicar's Homeſtead. *Quære: Standeth not the ſaid pigeon-houſe within the manorial rights of Calves-Town, and in that caſe, may not you, Andrew Night-*

ſhade, Eſq. lord of ſaid manor, remove, or cauſe to be remov'd, ſaid vicar's pigeon-houſe.

NIGHTSHADE.

Pull down, eraſe, deſtroy, and level with the ground; thoſe are my words. Now give me the opinion.

FRAMPTON.

He has given no opinion.

NIGHTSHADE.

No opinion! what the plague is this your errand? Am I to be made a fool of?

FRAMPTON.

To his clients Mr. Manlove gives opinions, to his friends advice. He wiſhes you to let the pigeon-houſe ſtand where it does.

NIGHTSHADE.

A fig for what he wiſhes.

FRAMPTON.

However, if you're ſo determin'd, he does not deny but you may pull it down.

NIGHTSHADE.

Why that's enough. Then down it goes: I'll ſow the land with ſalt.

FRAMPTON.

Nevertheleſs, he wills me to tell you, that this muſt be done *tuo periculo*, as the ſaying is; for if your conſcience does not prevent you from pulling it down, the law will make you build it up again.

NIGHTSHADE.

The law has made a fool of you, methinks: Why, what the deuce do you blow hot and cold in the ſame breath? Is this the way you treat your clients? Am I to be fobb'd off thus by an old methodical piece of clock-work, by a ſtiff ſtarcht limb of the law, a cutter of gooſe quills, and a ſcraper of parchments? No: Evacuate my chamber. Tell your principal I'll none of his advice; I value his opinion not a ruſh: Shall I be taught and tutor'd at theſe years?

I'm

I'm ſure I am an older man, and I believe a wiſer than himſelf—ſo tell him, Maſter Frampton.

FRAMPTON.

Have you no other commands for me than theſe?

NIGHTSHADE.

Pooh!

FRAMPTON.

I am your obedient—Good evening to your honour. [*Exit.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Now why the devil won't that fellow be in a paſſion? he'll no more be put out of his temper, than a German poſtillion will out of his pace—So, Gregory! what news? have you found out the attorney?

SCENE V.

Enter GREGORY.

GREGORY.

Your honour ſhall hear the whole proceeding: At Thavies-Inn I firſt got ſcent of him, threw off, and took the drag as far as Shoe-Lane; there he hung cover; I had a warm burſt to the Fleet; hunted him thro' Turn-again-Lane to the Old-Bailey; got an entapis, and run into him in Labour-in-vain-Court, Old Fiſh-Street-Hill——

NIGHTSHADE.

Well, and what ſays he to the proſecution?

GREGORY.

For ſome time he ſaid nothing; for when I firſt arrived he was on a viſit to a friend under ſentence of death in Newgate: however, after a while he came home, and then——

NIGHTSHADE.

What ſaid he then? to the point, Dunce.

GREGORY.

Why he ſaid, an pleaſe your honour, he wou'd have nothing to do with the buſineſs: There's no credit to be got by ſuch proſecutions; if it had been

on

on a criminal indictment indeed—but he won't be concern'd in any vexatious ſuit about game; humanity won't ſuffer him.

NIGHTSHADE.

Humanity indeed! was ever the like heard? But, Sirrah, this is all a lie of your own inventing, and your bones ſhall anſwer for it. (*Threatening to cane him.*

SCENE VI.

STAPLETON, *and* NIGHTSHADE.

STAPLETON.

Keep the peace, in the King's name! what's the matter now, friend Andrew?

NIGHTSHADE.

Why this ſot would fain have me believe that a Newgate ſolicitor will refuſe a ſuit upon motives of humanity: A likely tale indeed! He comes home from the ſociety of a condemn'd malefactor, and ſcruples levying the penalty againſt a poaching parſon. What would the noblemen and gentlemen, aſſociated for the preſervation of our game, ſay to that?

STAPLETON.

Who cares what they would ſay! What have men of buſineſs to do with ſuch diſputes?

NIGHTSHADE.

Men of buſineſs! I have no buſineſs: I left off trade, thank heaven, in time: You'll ſtay till it has left off you.

STAPLETON.

Why ſo? Our warehouſes are as full, our commiſſions as many, our credit as good as ever: What do you ſee about us makes you prophecy ſo ill?

NIGHTSHADE.

I tell you, Sir, your trade is ebbing faſt away from you in every quarter of the globe. Look out and ſatisfy yourſelf; but I have done, 'tis no concern of mine—What are your treaties with the Portugueſe?

waſte

waſte paper; linings for old trunks to carry home the refuſe goods, that they return upon your hands. Another man would flatter you; but I'm your friend; I let you know theſe things in time.

STAPLETON.

A moſt conſiderate precaution, truly.

NIGHTSHADE.

I have now no leiſure for converſations of this nature, but I would aſk a thinking man, what muſt be the fate of your Turkey trade? Undone. You've burnt their ſhips it ſeems, now you may burn your own; you'll have no further call for them, unleſs you ſend them to your colonies, to air your goods and exerciſe your ſailors—but I've ſomething elſe to think of—Gregory, my hat! I'm ſtaying here too long. Your ſervant, Mr. Stapleton—remember I have told you now, I've let you know your danger——

STAPLETON.

And in the tendereſt manner; you are the kindeſt friend: If we are ruin'd, you'll have nothing to regret—Your ſervant—we ſhall meet again at ſupper——

NIGHTSHADE.

I juſt ſtep back to tell you that your weavers are all riſing: I fell in with a large party of them in the ſtreets: Your people migrating by thouſands: What! men muſt not ſtarve.—I hint this to you gently, and in pure good will; I have no intereſt to ſerve—and ſo your ſervant for an hour or two—I'll tell you more when I return—Oh, if I was a man to turn the gloomy ſide of things upon you, I could draw a melancholly picture truly! [*Exit.*

STAPLETON.

The man who tells me a diſtaſteful lye, in ſome ſort may be ſaid to recommend the truth; but he who, like old Nightſhade, makes the truth offenſive, recommends a lye. [*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE VII.

LÆTITIA, *and* LUCY.

LÆTITIA.

Lucy, come hither—you have a brother, I think, who is one of Counſellor Manlove's clerks.

LUCY.

I have, madam; and tho' I ſay it, as promiſing, genteel, well-ſpoken a young man as you would wiſh to ſet your eyes on; he is my only brother, ma'am.

LÆTITIA.

Let that be an excuſe for your forwardneſs. I am not enquiring into his character.

LUCY.

If you did, ma'am, I aſſure you it will ſtand the ſtricteſt enquiry; my papa gave both of us an education—

LÆTITIA.

Your papa! let it be father in your mouth, if I might adviſe you.

LUCY.

Humph!—There's a perſon wants to ſpeak with you.

LÆTITIA.

What perſon?

LUCY.

A perſon from abroad; a painting man, I believe; he ſays he has a recommendation to you—there are many ſuch call here.

LÆTITIA.

If he has any letter of recommendation, deſire he will be pleaſed to ſend it in. (*Exit Lucy.*) I cannot reconcile myſelf to this methodical courſe of proceeding; in the name of all that's happy, let our inclinations get the ſtart of our propoſals: If I could meet this Mr. Manlove naturally, and without form; if we were

were then to ſingle out each other by the guidance of no other monitor than the heart, and if a thouſand ifs beſides were all to prove realities, a happy alliance might ſucceed; but to be turn'd into a room to undergo the profeſt ſurvey of a man, who comes upon a viſit of liking, is inſupportably humiliating. It may well be ſaid of ſome fathers, that they drive a ſmithfield bargain for their daughters, when with butcher-like inſenſibility they ſhew 'em out for ſale like cattle in a market. *(Lucy returns.)*

LUCY.

The gentleman preſents his reſpects to you, and deſires you to peruſe this letter; I think he is altogether as perſonable a young man as I would wiſh to ſee. *(Gives the letter.)*

LÆTITIA.

Sure you forget yourſelf—let me ſee—from Counſellor Manlove!—what is this?

Madam,

The bearer of this letter, is a young man in whoſe proſperity I am warmly intereſted. He is lately return'd from Italy, where he has made ſome proficiency in the art of which you are a miſtreſs; and as I flatter myſelf you will find him not unworthy, I beg leave to recommend him to your protection and eſteem. When my nephew has the honour of being known to you, he can give you fuller ſatisfaction in this young man's particular than I can; in the mean time I venture to add, that Mr. Manlove will conſider every favour you beſtow, in this inſtance, as conferr'd upon himſelf. I have the honour to be, Madam,

Your moſt obedient, and moſt humble Servant,

CHARLES MANLOVE, *Sen.*

Where is the gentleman? introduce him directly.

(LUCY *goes out, and brings in* CHARLES.

Your humble ſervant, Sir: You are the gentleman referr'd to in this letter——

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

I am the perſon, Madam. What a lovely young woman! *(aſide.*

LÆTITIA.

You are lately from Italy: Where did you principally purſue your ſtudies?

CHARLES.

At Rome: I viſited Florence, Bologna, Venice and other places; but I regard Rome as the grand repoſitory of the antique, and for that reaſon I made my principal reſidence there.

LÆTITIA.

To what branch of the art did you chiefly direct your attention?

CHARLES.

To the ſtudy of beauty, Madam; and that in its ſimpleſt forms: A Laocoon, a Hercules, or a Caracalla may aſtoniſh; but it is a Fauſtina, a Venus, an Apollo that delights, that raviſhes—But I am ſpeaking to you on a ſubject of which you are both by art a miſtreſs, and an example by nature.

LÆTITIA.

Upon my word! *(aſide.)* Come, Sir; we are here in the way of the family: allow me to ſhew you into another apartment. *(She ſtops.)* Was young Mr. Manlove at Rome when you was?

CHARLES.

He was.

LÆTITIA.

I underſtand he has a very great regard for you.

CHARLES.

I hope I ſhall not forfeit his good opinion.

LÆTITIA.

It does you much honour: All the world ſpeaks highly of Mr. Manlove. I'll ſhew you the way.

CHARLES.

Charming girl! I am in love with her at firſt ſight.

[*Exeunt.*

LUCY,

LUCY.

So, ſo! a very promiſing beginning. As ſure as can be there's ſomething in the wind about this Manlove: I ſuſpect the letter to be a fetch; and as for this painter, I am miſtaken, if he is not ſome how or other in the ſecret—'tis a mighty pretty fellow.—Ah, brother Dibble, I am glad to ſee you. How goes the world with you?

SCENE VIII.

LUCY, *and* DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

Buſily, my girl, buſily. I have borrowed a moment's time from company to run to you: I have luckily found you alone: Utter not a word; be all attention: Jack Nightſhade, the country boy I made acquaintance with laſt year, is now in town; but not a word of that—He is at a tavern hard by, with ſome lads of mettle, who puſh about the glaſs. What ſay you, Huſſey, to a bold ſtroke for a huſband?

LUCY.

For a huſband! You are joking.

DIBBLE.

Serious, upon my honour! Oh, when the blood begins to boil, and the brain begins to turn, every thing may be attempted. He has ſignified to me that he is in want of a wife; you, I ſuppoſe, have no objection to a huſband; ſo far you are both of a mind. He ſays the lady muſt be rich; the condition is a reaſonable one, and you muſt provide a fortune for the purpoſe: What ſay you to your miſtreſs's? He viſits you in the name of Mr. Manlove; why may not you receive him in that of Miſs Fairfax?

LUCY.

Impoſſible! Don't you know his father lodges in this very houſe?

DIBBLE.

Scare boys with bug-bears: I have provided againſt danger; and with a promiſe of a good round ſum, upon the wedding night, have made old Gregory my own: He will aid our project, and keep watch upon old Surly-boots, I warrant you.

LUCY.

But what is gain'd, if we ſhou'd compaſs our ends? the young man is a minor, and his father wou'd diſinherit him.

DIBBLE.

Fear nothing—he's of age—Gregory confirms it: And as for his father's diſinheriting him, I'll tell you a ſecret; it is not in his power: When the Counſellor ſettled an eſtate on Charles, old Nightſhade cut him off with a ſhilling, and gave his fortune to Jack: I drew the deed myſelf; it is as tight as law can tye it.

LUCY.

I don't know what to ſay; a ſettlement to be ſure is ſomething; Mrs. Nightſhade and an equipage, is better than plain Lucy and a pair of pattens: But then my heart miſgives me—and the boy, they ſay, is ſuch a cub——

DIBBLE.

Fine airs, in truth! Nay, if you are ſo exceptious, pleaſe yourſelf; it's no affair of mine; I've done with it.

LUCY.

Hold, hold; you are ſo touchy if one ſpeaks—My madam will be monſtrous angry, but no matter. Yeſterday was married John Nightſhade, Eſq. to Miſs——O, Gemini, 'twill make a flaming daſh!

DIBBLE.

Ay, ay, leave me to draw the marriage deed; I'll jointure you I warrant. Come, decide; time's precious, and the moment ſerves: Old Nightſhade's out; the ladies too, I underſtand, are on the wing—When ſhall we come?

LUCY.

LUCY.

When? I don't know—I vow I'm half afraid—Is there no law againſt me, if I am caught, and the ſcheme fails?

DIBBLE.

Pſhaw! you are ſo irreſolute; ev'n be a ſervant-maid all days of your life; I care not.

LUCY.

No, brother; I've as much ambition as my betters, ſo here's my hand—I'm with you—give me half an hour's time to con my leſſon and I'll be ready for you.

DIBBLE.

That's my brave girl! Courage! the day's our own. If every thing's in train, and the coaſt clear, let Gregory meet us at the corner of the ſtreet, exactly in half an hour's time. But, hark'ee, Lucy; Jack is incog, and takes his brother Manlove's name, remember that: By the way, I ſuſpect ſomething's in the wind between your Madam and Mr. Charles.

LUCY.

Why ſo?

DIBBLE.

Becauſe I ſaw him turn into her room juſt now, in an undreſs; he paſs'd me on the ſtairs, and whiſper'd me in the ear, not to open my lips concerning his being here to a ſingle ſoul, for my life; therefore make no miſchief—Farewel, I muſt be gone. [*Exit.*

LUCY.

Your humble ſervant, virtuous Miſs Lætitia Fairfax; your painter then, as I ſuſpected, turns out a lover in diſguiſe; and you, it ſeems, have your intrigues as well as other folks. Who wou'd be nice about character in theſe times, when all the world conſpires to put virtue out of countenance, and keep vice in?

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Room in Stapleton's Houſe.*

NIGHTSHADE, *and* STAPLETON.

NIGHTSHADE.

AND ſo you'll poſitively ſhip thoſe bales of Norwich Crape for Holland?

STAPLETON.

I purpoſe ſo to do.

NIGHTSHADE.

You purpoſe ſo to do! and the Kerſies and Callimancoes and Perpetuanoes too I warrant.

STAPLETON.

I do.

NIGHTSHADE.

The devil you do! I tell you what then, Maſter Stapleton, they will not have their name for nothing; you'll find them Perpetuanoes on your hands: I'd ſend tea to America as ſoon. Why ſure I underſtand the Dutch markets; ſure I think I do; you've found I underſtood them.

STAPLETON.

But times are altered, brother Andrew.

NIGHTSHADE.

With the devil to 'em. Times are alter'd truly, and trade is alter'd, and merchants are alter'd and grown obſtinate blockheads, deaf to good counſel, ignorant of their buſineſs; a frivolous, goſſiping, pleaſure hunting crew; forſaking their counters for their country-houſes, Change for Change-alley.—What ſort of a ſeaſon at Newfoundland? have you ſhip'd your fiſh yet for the Mediteranian-markets?

But

But what is it all to me? I have wound up my bottom: 'Twas a noble hit, Maſter Stapleton, that ſpeculation of mine in ſaltpetre.

STAPLETON.

I believe it turn'd to tolerable account.

NIGHTSHADE.

I believe it did; I may venture to aſſue you it did, to tolerable account, as you ſay, tho' you predicted otherwiſe; it made my pillow for me; yes, yes, thank heaven, I'm eaſy; I've laid down my cares.

STAPLETON.

And taken up content. What a happy fellow are you, friend Andrew!

NIGHTSHADE.

But I tell you you're miſtaken, I am not a happy fellow; I would not be thought happy; the world's too wicked for an honeſt man to be happy or contented in it.

STAPLETON.

But you are out of the world; you are ſettled in a peaceful retreat, in rural tranquillity, cultivating your own acres, enjoying your own produce.

NIGHTSHADE.

Blood and fire, I tell you other people are enjoying my produce; my ſervants are embezzeling my property, my neighbours are deſtroying my game, the vermin are laying waſte my granaries, and the rot is making havock with my ſheep; and how the vengeance then can I be happy?

STAPLETON.

By bearing every thing with a patient mind.

NIGHTSHADE.

Patient! I am patient to a fault.

STAPLETON.

By reflecting, when your ſervants or neighbours moleſt you, what an examplary young man you are bleſt with for a ſon.

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Yes, yes, the boy's as good as his neighbours.

STAPLETON.

I never heard ſo univerſal a good charcter.

NIGHTSHADE.

'Tis a ſober, frugal lad, that's the truth on't.

STAPLETON.

So accompliſh'd a genius, ſo diſtinguiſh'd a taſte for the fine arts.

NIGHTSHADE.

For the fine arts! that's rather too much, I know no art Jack has but ſetting trimmers, worming puppies, and making fowling nets. *(aſide.*

STAPLETON.

Your ſon, friend Addrew, is not like the preſent frippery race of young men; he is a man of ſound principle and good morals; no libertine, no free-thinker, no gameſter.

NIGHTSHADE.

Gameſter indeed! I'd game him, with the devil to him.

STAPLETON.

He has more elegant reſources: The woman muſt be happy who can engage his affections.

NIGHTSHADE.

I wiſh your ward Miſs Fairfax was of your opinion.

STAPLETON.

Are you ſincere?

NIGHTSHAE.

Why to be ſure I am. Don't I know ſhe'll have a very conſiderable fortune?

STAPLETON.

A fig for her fortune—here's my hand—ſo the young folks can like each other, and Mr. Manlove is conſenting——

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Who? who is conſenting? Mr. Manlove?

STAPLETON.

Ay ſurely; I'm afraid we do not rightly underſtand each other: Which of your ſons are you ſpeaking of?

NIGHTSHADE.

Which of my ſons am I ſpeaking of! the only one I ever do ſpeak of; the only one which I acknowledge, Jack. You cou'dn't think me ſuch a fool to recommend that puppily pig-tail'd ape, with his eſſences and pulvilios; that monkey, whom my ſilly brother ſent to ſee the world, with his grand tour, and his pictures, and his impertinencies? No—I tell you once for all, I've done with him; he has dropt my name and I my nature; let him that chriſten'd him anew, keep him; I have done with him.

STAPLETON.

You ſhock me to hear you ſay ſo.

NIGHTSHADE.

What, ſhan't I ſpeak of my own ſon as I think fit?

STAPLETON.

Yes, if you ſpeak as a father ſhou'd.

NIGHTSHADE.

And who's the judge of that? Have you a ſon? Are you a father? No, you are a guardian: Heaven help the poor young woman that's your ward. Marry her to Charles Manlove! marry her to her garters ſooner, and tye her up upon the curtain rod, 'twere a better deed. And what know you of the fine arts? Are you a painter as well as your ward here? I ſee no tokens of it; the London 'Prentice, and the March to Finchley, ſeem to be the ſum total of your collection—His taſte, it ſeems, has captivated you; his taſte for what? for Camblets, for Cafoys, for Mancheſter and Norwich commodities? There lies your learning; thoſe are your univerſities.

STAPLE-

STAPLETON.

Andrew Nightſhade, Andrew Nightſhade, recollect yourſelf: We'll converſe when you are cool: I talk to no man in a paſſion.

NIGHTSHADE.

I in a paſſion? 'Tis the firſt time I was ever told ſo, and ſhall be the laſt, from you at leaſt—Here, Gregory, where are you: —I'll be gone this inſtant; I'll have my things pack'd up; I'll rid your houſe, at leaſt, of one paſſionate man. I in a paſſion? I that never loſt my temper—But your ſervant, Sir; your ſervant, Mr. Stapleton: Perhaps you'll ſay I'm in a paſſion now. Here, Gregory! why Gregory! [*Exit.*

STAPLETON *(alone.)*

Ha, ha, ha! of a certain, Andrew, thou'rt a ridiculous old fellow. If I had an acquaintance with the poets, I would get them to exhibit thy humours on the ſtage; 'twould be a diverting ſcene, and no bad moral.

Enter Mrs. STAPLETON *and* LÆTITIA.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Here's a fine ſtorm; he's calling for his ſervants to pack up his things; he vows he'll quit the houſe immediately.

LÆTITIA.

A happy reſolution. What a ſnapdragon it is! No Yorkſhire houſewife in her waſhing-week can be more peeviſh.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

I wiſh he was out of the houſe; I cannot bear to have your peace annoy'd.

STAPLETON.

My peace! You have had a viſitor, Lætitia.

LÆTITIA.

A brother artiſt, and a friend of Mr. Manlove's, I declare I've loſt my heart to him.

STAPLE-

STAPLETON.

Then I deny that he's a friend of Mr. Manlove's.

LÆTITIA.

Oh, Sir, he is the prettieſt man! ſo candid, ſo intelligent; full of his art, and glowing warm with all that taſte for the antique, which true genius is ſure to gain by travel.

STAPLETON.

Ay, ay, I underſtand you; he's been praiſing your performances.

LÆTITIA.

I own it; but what flatters me above all, he commends your portrait exceedingly; I ſhall proceed in it with twice the ſpirit I began.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

He has turned her head with flattery; the grace of Raphael, the deſign of Michael Angelo, Titian's warmth, and Corregio's beauty, centre all in her unrivall'd compoſitions!

STAPLETON.

Hey-day! where learnt you all this gabble? here's a pack of names for a citizen's wife to get by heart.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Do you think I've clean'd her pallet then for nothing? The doctor's Merry-andrew knows the names of his drugs, or he's not fit for his place. We are going this inſtant upon a viſit of virtu to Mr. Manlove's: This young painter ſpeaks in raptures of his collection: He has ſome pictures, which are ſaid to be inimitable.

LÆTITIA.

Dear Sir, I hope you've no objection. He has talk'd to me ſo much of a Lucretia by Guido, that I am dying to viſit her.

STAPLETON.

I ſhou'd doubt if Lucretia wou'd do as much for you. I hardly think this viſit is in rule.

LÆTITIA.

It is done every day; half the town has been there: I go there as a ſtudent—beſides, Mrs. Stapleton goes with me.

STAPLETON.

Well, well, I am no critic in theſe matters, entertain yourſelves and you have my free leave. Much pleaſure to you both—your ſervant. [*Exit.*

LÆTITIA.

Come, my dear madam, the light ſtill ſerves us; let us loſe no time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *The Painting Room.*

Enter LUCY.

LUCY.

Now the duce fetch this madcap brother of mine, what a twitter has he thrown me into! I can ſettle to nothing: Madam and her ſham-painter have made a fine diſorder in this room. I don't know any uſe theſe geniuſes are of, but to put every thing out of its place. Ah! is it you?

Enter DIBBLE

DIBBLE.

Huſh, huſh! compoſe yourſelf; you had like to have ruin'd all: Why didn't you ſend Gregory to the ſtreet's end, as you agreed?

LUCY.

Lud, I'm in ſuch a flutter—I don't know, I'm frighted. Is he here?

DIBBLE.

Ready: Prim'd high with briſk Champagne: The train'd is laid; you have the fire; touch it, and off it goes.

LUCY.

Fire! I've no fire about me. Did the ſervants ſee you?

DIB.

DIBBLE.

No; Gregory let us in, and has the young 'Squire now in keeping: There never was so fortunate a moment. Hark! he's at the door.

JACK. *(from without)*

Hist! Lawyer—Pickle—Bully-Jack!——shall I come in?

DIBBLE.

He must come in; slip out a moment 'till I prepare him, and then—Remember, Lucy, he is Mr. Manlove here, and yourself Lætitia. Go your ways. *(Exit Lucy.)* Now, my lad of glory, I shall show you a phænomenon, a star of the first water.

Enter JACK.

JACK.

Water! I scorn it: Give me wine: There's honesty in that, and wit and love. I'm monstrously in love—but where's the lady?

DIBBLE.

Oh, she's at hand, and half your own already. I've been preaching to her—Miss, says I——

JACK.

Rot your *says I!* who cares for what you say: Show me the girl: I want no lawyer in this case; Champagne's my counsellor. You are a blockhead, Dibble, and a flincher: I'm for all the game; fee'd on both sides, boy; a bottle in my right hand, and a bottle in my left; double-charg'd, at heart and head; one for courage and t'other for invention. Pooh! my brother's a fool to me; his coat was never in such company before. Where is the lady, I say? I must see the lady.

DIBBLE.

Well, well, be patient; you shall see the lady. [*Exit.*

JACK.

Ay, this puts every thing in motion: Now the world goes round: It has found its legs at last, and dances

like Plough-Monday. Drown it, 'twas aſleep before. What's all this lumber for *(ſtumbling over the Eaſel)* The devil! who are you? *(ſpeaking to the Layman)* what's your profeſſion? An eaſy, ſlender, dangling figure, and as much of a gentleman as moſt you ſhall meet.—The piggins! now I ſmoak the jeſt: She paints. Oh damn it! ſhe's an artiſt—That won't do; there's no ſtanding that; I muſt overturn all this trumpery: I ſhall ſoon tumble you out of the room, my dear—your reign's a ſhort one, take my word. Ay, here ſhe comes!

Enter DIBBLE *with* LUCY.

DIBBLE.

Mr. Manlove, this is Miſs Fairfax. Miſs, this is Mr. Manlove.

JACK.

Madam, behold the fondeſt of your ſlaves. My friend here Lawyer Dibble has inform'd you that my name is Manlove, and he tells me you are call'd Miſs Fairfax. Be it ſo; if he tells a lie, he is not the firſt of his profeſſion who has ſo done. If you ſhould think that I am rather elevated and in the air, I won't deny it; Champagne, you know, is a ſearching liquor, and my ſcull is none of the deepeſt; but if you ſuppoſe that I am ſo blind as to overlook your beauties, or my own perfections, you are not the perſon I take you for. Dibble, come hither, make the Lady acquainted with ſome of my good qualities. Diſcuſs.

LUCY.

Oh, Sir, what need? the good qualities of Mr. Manlove are in every body's mouth.

JACK.

Deuce take me now, if that is any flattery to me.

DIBBLE.

I told you, Madam, what a modeſt young gentleman he was.

JACK.

JACK.

Oh, you're a precious devil. Be pleas'd to tell the Lady likewiſe what a brave eſtate I have got; ſuch things come naturally from a lawyer's mouth; tell her what it is, and where it lies: Drown me, if I know where to find an acre of it.

LUCY.

Oh, never name eſtate when Mr. Manlove's in the caſe: Your perſon, air, addreſs——

JACK.

Madam, you do me honour. 'Egad, I ſhall have no occaſion for courtſhip. (*aſide.*)

LUCY.

Your genius, taſte, accompliſhments—I myſelf have ſome ſmall turn for painting—

JACK.

Yes, and I ſhould like you as well without it. (*aſide.*

LUCY.

But you, I dare ſay, are a maſter-hand; and poetry, no doubt, is full as much your own.

JACK.

Faith, there's not much to chooſe between 'em.

LUCY.

But then your education—one may ſee that you have travell'd.

DIBBLE.

Oh, yes, that's very viſible.

JACK.

Well ſaid, lawyer—She has a damnable clack.

LUCY.

I ſhould be delighted to hear an account of your travels: I dare ſay you have met many ſingular adventures.

JACK.

A thouſand; but I have taken an oath never to ſpeak of 'em.

LUCY.

LUCY.

Oh, you muſt conquer ſuch ſcruples. What advantages has your uncle's bounty given you, Mr. Manlove, over that poor lad in the country!

JACK.

And yet I'd rather hear one kind word ſaid of that poor lad in the country, than a whole volume of Mr. Manlove's praiſes. I'm hipp'd, whenever I hear the ſubject mentioned.

DIBBLE.

Make up to him, Lucy, or he's loſt. Jack Nightſhade, what are you about? one bold attack, and ſhe's your own.

JACK.

It may be ſo; but you muſt know I have a kind of partiality for that ſame country lubber, Jack Nightſhade; and 'till I can find a Lady, who will prefer him to his brother, I will remain as I am; ſo there's an end of the matter, d'ye ſee, and no harm done. Madam, I'm your ſervant. [*Exit.*

LUCY.

So finiſhes the chapter of huſbands. I thank you for your ſcheme.

DIBBLE.

Thank yourſelf for your folly. What poſſeſt you with the thought of touching upon the lad in the country? how could you be ſo flippant?

LUCY.

What does it ſignify? He is too cunning to be caught with chaff; e'en drop your project.

DIBBLE.

No, let deſpair go hang. I am not eaſily repuls'd: Take courage, and commit yourſelf to me; I have reſources yet you know not of. Come, Lucy, you ſhall ſee my genius riſes on defeat. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Manlove's Houſe.*

CHARLES. (*Alone.*)

It is time to take off the maſk; I have ſeen and heard enough: She who can captivate both eyes and ears

ears at once, is irreſiſtable; Miſs Fairfax is ſo compos'd, that ſhe has beauty enough to blind our underſtandings, if ſhe wanted wit; and wit enough to blind our eyes, if ſhe wanted beauty. I will go to her in this habit once again, and ſolicit an interview for Mr. Manlove: If ſhe readily grants it, I will avail myſelf of her compliance, and inſtantly diſcloſe myſelf—if not—But what, in the name of wonder, have we got here: Ha, ha, ha! my Paris ſuit, by all that's brilliant; the very *chef d'œuvre* of the ſuperlative Monſ. Le Duc: That coat was made for grand occaſions; it eſcorted me to the nuptials of the great Count d'Artois; it has now the honour to attend the revels of the illuſtrious Jack Nightſhade.

Enter JACK.

JACK

Ay, and had I been willing, it might have aſſiſted at another wedding: 'Egad, it might have carried off a fine girl, and one of the firſt fortunes in the city.

CHARLES.

I ſhould have thought your ſcenes had rather laid amongſt the girls of freedom, than of fortune.

JACK.

This lady, Sir, had both. Swear to me you'll be ſecret, and I'll tell you where I've been.

CHARLES.

Nay, Jack, you'll truſt me ſure without an oath; you know I am no tell-tale. Where have you been?

JACK.

You'll ſcarce believe it; where on all this earth but to the very houſe, where old Surlyboots ſets up his reſt!

CHARLES.

To Mr. Stapleton's?

JACK.

To the enemies head quarters: A high ſtroke!

CHARLES.

And what carried you thither?

JACK.

JACK.

A girl: The wench I told you of.

CHARLES.

But what ſort of a wench? I don't underſtand how any girl could carry you to Mr. Stapleton's.

JACK.

No! She'd have carried me any where; all the world over: She is ready to ſet out on her travells.

CHARLES.

And her name is——

JACK.

Fairfax.

CHARLES.

How!

JACK.

Lætitia Fairfax.

CHARLES.

What is it you have been doing? I am much intereſted in this lady's good opinion, and if you have done or ſaid any thing to offend her——

JACK.

Offend her! Zooks, if you had heard how mere a country whelp ſhe made of me, you wou'd own I had moſt reaſon to be offended of the two.

CHARLES.

Still I don't underſtand you; you tell your ſtory ſo confuſedly, I can make out nothing from it.

JACK.

Tell it yourſelf then, brother.

CHARLES.

But this precaution I muſt give you, Jack, not to go upon that ground again; keep your ſallies within proper bounds, and direct them to proper objects. Miſs Fairfax is a lady for whom I have the tendereſt eſteem; have a care therefore, young man, how you affront her as you value my reſentment.

JACK.

Whuh!

Enter

Enter FREDERICK.

FREDERICK.

Sir, Mr. Manlove requeſts your company at his chambers immediately.

CHARLES.

I attend him—Brother, I am ſerious—Hitherto I hope no miſchief has been done; but I expect that you obſerve what I have told you, and be more prudent for the future. [*Exit.*

JACK.

And be a prig like you—Oh, you ſhall ſmart for this; I'll curry your fine hide. Now would I give both ears from off this head, if I could make the girl but fairly jilt this puppy, and revenge myſelf upon him.

Enter DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

Squire!

JACK.

Ah, Dibble, I have made myſelf a precious blockhead.

DIBBLE.

What, in the penitentials? Is the Champagne cloudy?

JACK.

Vexation ſobers me like a wet napkin. Oh, if I cou'd ſee the girl again!

DIBBLE.

Do you wiſh it?

JACK.

Wiſh it! I'd crawl to Scotland on my knees; nay more, I'd live there all my days, ſo I could bilk this elder brother with Miſs Fairfax.

DIBBLE.

Say you ſo, Squire? This betters my beſt hopes. Follow me once more to Mr. Stapleton's: Take courage, and my life upon't the lady is your own.

JACK.

Have with you then; I'm ready; come along.

DIBBLE.

Hold, not so fast—the old lion may be in his den. Give me one quarter of an hour's law, and then if we miscarry, crop these ears and nail them up like vermin to your walls.

JACK.

Agreed! I take you at your word. *(Exit Dibble.)* Now, my fine brother, if I catch you on the hip I'll give your pride a fall; I'll shew you that a clown may have a courtier's cunning. Hey-day! who comes here?

Mrs. STAPLETON *and* LÆTITIA, *usher'd in by* FREDERICK.

FREDERICK.

I beg pardon, Sir, I thought you was gone out: These ladies are desirous of seeing the pictures, and I was conducting them to the room.

JACK.

I will take that honour on myself. Go before and open the windows. *(Exit Fred.)* You are fond of paintings, ladies; I am glad it is in my power to entertain you.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

You are the owner, Sir, of this admirable collection. Your name is Manlove.

JACK.

At the service of the ladies always. I'll pass a few of lawyer Dibble's airs upon them—I'm in a rare cue. *(aside.)*

LÆTITIA.

What do they mean by talking up this young man? He has a miserable address: I see very little of the man of fashion about him.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

I cannot say much for his person to be sure.

JACK.

She has fixt her eyes upon me; she is taken with my person and address—Don't you find it rather cold, ladies?

adies? —I wiſh there was a fire in the room, that I might give her a taſte of my breeding. *(aſide.)*

LÆTITIA.

The public is much bound to you for giving them acceſs to your collection.

JACK.

If the public found no more amuſement in them than I do, they might hang in the dark till doom's-day.

LÆTITIA.

You jeſt, I believe: Is it poſſible, after taking ſuch pains in procuring them, you can have no enjoyment in the poſſeſſion of them?

JACK.

Even ſo, Madam; they reſemble matrimony in that reſpect; the purſuit is the pleaſure. But come, ladies, the room is ready, and I'll ſhew you the way.—What the devil does that old Duenna come for?

(Goes out.

LÆTITIA.

Is this the accompliſh'd Mr. Manlove? He ſeems in a ſtrange humour: Are you ſure he is perfectly ſober? I declare I ſcarce like to follow him.

JACK *(returns.)*

Ladies, this is the way: Indulge me with the honour of your hand. *(leads out Lætitia)* [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

An Apartment magnificently furniſhed with pictures.

JACK *introducing Mrs.* STAPLETON *and* LÆTITIA.

JACK.

There, Ladies; there they hang: A jolly crew of 'em. Old Ladies in furrs and furbelows up to their throats, and young ones without a rag to cover 'em: Theſe painters are but ſcurvy taylors; they'll ſend a goddeſs into the world without a cloud to cover her: There are ſome pretty conceits go with their hiſtories, but they will ſpeak for themſelves; I am but little in their ſecrets.

LÆTITIA.

What a blaze of beauty! there's the *Titian* Venus; heavens! what a form! what brilliant hues! But look, dear Madam, here is grace and dignity; *Guido*'s Lucretia: the dagger in her breaſt, and in the act of heroic ſelf-deſtruction: What reſolution! what a ſpirit has the great artiſt thrown into thoſe eyes!

JACK.

Yes, ſhe had a devil of a ſpirit: She ſtabb'd herſelf in a pique upon being croſs'd in love.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

You preſume on our ignorance; hiſtory, I believe, aſſigns more elevated motives for Lucretia's death.

JACK.

Very likely; there were great pains taken to ſmother the ſtory; but 'tis as I tell you—I had it from a near relation of the family.

LÆTITIA.

Ridiculous! Do you obſerve that picture, Madam; 'tis a melancholly ſtory, very finely told by Pouſſin: It is a view of Marſeilles at the time of the plague, with a capital figure of the good biſhop in the midſt of the groupe.

JACK

Biſhop, Madam! that perſon which you look upon is a phyſician, and the people round about him are his patients; they are in a deſperate way it muſt be confeſt. Do you ſee that angry figure in the corner; he is a gameſter: he is picking lead out of loaded dice to run into bullets, to fire through his own head: 'Tis no bad moral.

LÆTITIA.

You are infinitely kind to favour us with theſe anecdotes: If you are thus gracious to all ſtrangers, the world will edify abundantly. But we won't put you to the trouble of explanation—we are not entirely ignorant—tho' your collection may be the beſt we have ſeen, it is not abſolutely the firſt.

JACK.

Belike then you are a painter, as well as the lady I viſited juſt now.

LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

In the preſence of ſuch maſters as are here aſſembled, I cannot call myſelf a painter; in my own chamber I ſometimes perſuade myſelf I am.

JACK.

Yes, I am told it is an art which ladies moſtly practiſe in their own chambers—What ſay you to that picture over the door? 'tis a merry conceit.

LÆTITIA.

It is the colouring of the Venetian ſchool: I ſhould gueſs it to be *Tintoret*.

JACK.

Oh, you are quite out of the ſtory.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

She is ſpeaking of the maſter: The ſtory is plainly that of Actæon, and no bad moral; he was turn'd into a ſtag, by the goddeſs of chaſtity, for his impertinent curioſity.

JACK.

Excuſe me, Madam, you miſtake the moral—That gentleman with the antlers on his head, is a city huſband, the principal lady in the ſhow is his wife; ſhe wears a creſcent on her forehead to ſignify ſhe is a dealer in horns; her companions are a groupe of city Madams: The painter drew them bathing to ſhew the warmth of their conſtitutions.

LÆTITIA.

Upon my word you have a great deal of wit, and you have a fine collection of paintings; but one capital piece is wanting.

JACK.

And what is that, pray?

LÆTITIA.

Modeſty: It will be an excellent companion to your Lucretia.

JACK.

But who ſhall I get to ſit for the likeneſs?

LÆTITIA.

You will find it admirably painted by the ſame maſter. Come, Madam, it is time for us to be gone.

JACK.

JACK.

You are not for the city-end of the town, I conclude.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Our home is in the city.

JACK.

Permit me to conduct you thither; I have a coach in waiting, and am bound to New Broad-Street, if you know such a place.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Intimately; but we have a carriage of our own.

LÆTITIA.

Can there be any attractions in the city to engage Mr. Manlove's regards?

JACK.

Oh, yes; an assignation, Madam: I am loth to disappoint a fond girl.

LÆTITIA.

'Tis charitably consider'd.

JACK.

Nay, I don't know but I shou'd be inclined to take her for better for worse, if it was not for one circumstance in her disfavour.

LÆTITIA.

May I ask what that may be?

JACK.

She has a deviliſh itch for painting: I shou'd expect to have all my gods and goddesses taken down to make room for her vulgar friends and relations.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Ay, that wou'd be a sorrowful exchange to my knowledge.

LÆTITIA.

Yes, have a care of that same painting girl: My life upon it she will slip through your hands.

JACK.

Why I have my eye upon that honest gentleman in the picture, with the stag's-horns, I must own—Who shall I tell her gave me the caution?

LÆTITIA.

No matter; when you see Miss Fairfax you'll remember me.

JACK.

JACK.

Fairfax! the vengeance: How came you to gueſs her name?

LÆTITIA.

Oh, Sir, there is but one painter in the ſtreet, and ſhe, I believe, will remain there; your collection is ſafe; ſhe will trouble you with none of her performances, none of her daubings, take my word. Your moſt obedient—Let us make haſte home, and be ready to receive him: Vain, ſenſeleſs coxcomb! how I ſhall enjoy his confuſſion! [*Exit with Mrs. Staple.*

JACK.

A good lively wench, but the devil of a tongue! I'll run and hand her to her coach. [*Exit.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter DIBBLE *and* LUCY.

LUCY.

STILL I proteſt againſt your project; we ſhall reap nothing from it, take my word, but ſhame and diſappointment; however, to convince you that my fears are not for myſelf, I am prepared and ſhall go through with it, as you deſire.

DIBBLE.

My life upon't, he takes the bait this time.

LUCY.

I doubt it, but no matter: Sure it's time that he was come. Hark! who is that? look out.

DIBBLE.

'Sdeath! Mrs. Stapleton and Miſs Lætitia.

LUCY.

What's to be done now?

DIBBLE.

We've nothing for it, but a deſperate ſally; ſlip the back-way down with me, and let us both go out and

and ſtop young Nightſhade: We can take him to my lodgings and prevent an interview that muſt be fatal.

LUCY.

It is too late to deliberate: Come on. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mrs. STAPLETON *and* LÆTITIA.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Come, my dear Lætitia, you think of this affair too ſeriouſly: You cannot much regret a man you never ſaw before.

LÆTITIA.

It's true; and yet, with ſhame I own it to you, I am mortified ſeverely. Was there ever ſuch a diſappointment?

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Either he treated us with inexcuſable contempt, or is profoundly ignorant. Did you remark the ridiculous obſervations he made on ſome of the pictures?

LÆTITIA.

Yes; but I ſet that down for miſtaken wit; in ſhort, his manners are of the vulgareſt caſt. Are theſe the fruits of public education? Is this the finiſh'd gentleman? the ſcholar? traveller?—His booriſh brother in the country cannot outgo this: And the world to be ſo blinded! Oftentimes it ſpeaks worſe of a man than he deſerves; it is ſeldom guilty of telling ſo many untruths in his favour.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

A gentleman deſires to ſpeak with Miſs Fairfax.

LÆTITIA.

'Tis he—Conduct him into the drawing-room; I'll wait on him immediately. [*Exit Ser.*

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Well, Lætitia, I need not recommend to you to treat him as he deſerves.

LÆTITIA.

I muſt be more, or leſs, than a woman, if I ſpar'd him. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

SERVANT *introducing* JACK NIGHTSHADE.

SERVANT.

Pleaſe to walk in here, Sir; Miſs Fairfax will wait on you immediately. [*Exit.*

JACK.

Ay, ay; I dare ſay ſhe will: Egad, there's no time to be loſt—Drown it, where's Dibble? I expected he wou'd meet me at the gate: If I ſhou'd ſtumble on old Cruſty—I don't like the looks of the land ſo well as I did: Here's ſuch a ſolitude, and ſuch a ceremony—Why the plague do they make me kick my heels here? What, the vengeance! is ſhe come again?

Enter LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

Your humble ſervant, Mr. Manlove: You ſcarce expected, I believe, to meet your viſitor again ſo ſoon.

JACK.

No, indeed: it is vaſtly beyond my hopes.

LÆTITIA.

You are punctual to your aſſignation, I perceive.

JACK.

Oh yes, Ma'am: to be ſure, Ma'am—How the plague ſhall I get rid of her?

LÆTITIA.

You did well to conſider the poor fond girl that is dying for you.

JACK.

She has the devil of an aſſurance—What are theſe London Ladies made of?

LÆTITIA.

He is thoroughly confounded: I'll give him a chance, however.—Have you any commands for me, Sir?

JACK.

Commands! Oh, none in life, I thank you; no commands. What won't that ſerve? No: She will

have her talk out at leaſt. I hope you lik'd the pictures? Sure Miſs Fairfax will come preſently.

LÆTITIA.

I admire your collection greatly; my expectations in that particular were not diſappointed.

JACK.

I underſtand your inſinuation, Madam; but Ladies expectations, I am told, are not always to be ſatisfied.

LÆTITIA.

In Mr. Manlove's inſtance, perhaps not eaſily.

JACK.

Really, Madam, I ſhou'd wiſh to do juſtice to a lady's good opinion: but your viſit, I muſt ſay, was rather unſeaſonable, and that elderly Lady was ſo vexatiouſly in the way.

LÆTITIA.

I am ſorry for it, Sir: I am afraid our viſit was rather out of rule.

JACK.

That's honeſt now; and ſince you own it, I muſt fairly ſay, the preſent is none of the moſt welcome.

LÆTITIA.

I readily believe it—and therefore, Sir, though it is not altogether in character for me to promote a converſation of ſuch a ſort as you hinted at when we met at your own houſe; yet, I muſt obſerve to you, if you have any ſuch propoſal in deſign, it will be for both our eaſe that you ſhou'd come to the point directly.

JACK.

To the point, Madam! Upon my ſoul I don't know what to ſay to that—To be ſure I did come here with a full and fixt deſign of offering myſelf to Miſs Fairfax upon the marrying lay, and that, you know, at beſt is but a hanging kind of job; ſo that if I appear rather dull of apprehenſion, I hope you will recollect that a man cannot be very merry when he's on his road to his execution.

LÆTITIA.

Oh, Sir, be under no concern on that account; aſſure yourſelf, I have to the full as little diſpoſition towards that ſtate as you can have.

JACK.

JACK.

Well ſaid again! but it won't take.—You are in the right; you are for enjoying your freedom.

LÆTITIA.

Since we are both agreed in that reſpect, what occaſion is there for more words? I believe we may break up the conference.

JACK.

As ſoon as ever you pleaſe; I am by no means for delaying you.

LÆTITIA.

I wait your motions, Mr. Manlove, I'm here at home.

JACK.

You cannot be more ſo than I am.

LÆTITIA.

Indeed! this conduct, Mr. Manlove, is ſo oppoſite to all that I expected from you, that I'm caſt into aſtoniſhment. Upon what reaſons, or from what caprice you've choſe to take it up I know not; natural it cannot be to any man. However, Sir, I'll take you at your word, and, for a moment, will ſuppoſe you more welcome in this houſe than you really are, and leave you in poſſeſſion of it. [*Exit.*

JACK.

Come, come, well off! I've bolted her at laſt. 'Fore George, I begin to be tired of my plumes: Every man's beſt in his own coat and his own character: Plain Jack and the country, wou'd have ſuited me better: There are ſo many demands upon a fine gentleman, that nobody but a fine gentleman can tell how to avoid them.

Enter GREGORY.

GREGORY.

Ah, Maſter Jacky, keep cloſe. Yonder's your old Dadd at the ſtreet door in a notable primmuniry.

JACK.

Death and the devil! how ſhall I break paſture without his ſeeing me?

GREGORY.

Never fear it; he has a job upon his hands will

tether him for one while. Egad, I hope they'll treat him with a ducking.

JACK.

What is the matter?

GREGORY.

Nay, nothing out of course; he has crack'd the news-man's noddle for winding his horn in his ear; he pretends to have delicate nerves, you know; and so the fellow rais'd a mob upon him, that has drove him into cover, and they are now baying the old buck at the door. Ay, yonder he is; you must keep close till he's off his stand.

JACK.

Have an eye upon the door—I hope they will scare him soundly; it may save your scull and mine many a hard pelt. But, Gregory, who is this fine Madam I've been talking to? Lawyer Dibble sure has not put me on a wrong scent: They introduc'd her to me as Miss Fairfax; are there two Miss Fairfaxes, as well as two Mr. Manloves; a false one and a true one?

GREGORY.

What shall I say now?—Oh, yes, there are two ladies of that name; but this is only a cousin of the other; a kind of hanger-on in the family.

JACK.

A hanger-on, do you say?—Keep your eye upon the door—Why, she's better dress'd, and a finer woman than her I'm in pursuit of.

GREGORY.

Ay, ay, but your's has the fortune; Dibble's Miss Fairfax is the girl for your purpose.

JACK.

But where is Dibble and his Miss Fairfax? I have danc'd attendance here a pretty while; what am I to think of all this?

GREGORY.

What are you to think of it? why I'll tell you; this young lady, d'ye see—Now don't you go about, Master Jacky, and say that I told you, but this young

young lady here, that you have been talking to, is—Hark, ſure your father's coming.

JACK.

I hear his foot upon the ſtairs; my bones ake at the ſound of it.

GREGORY.

Quick, quick, down the back ſtairs, and away for your life; ſo, ſo; that's well. [*Exit Jack.*

Enter NIGHTSHADE.

NIGHTSHADE.

Why, Gregory, raſcal, hangdog! what's become of you? run quickly down and drive thoſe bawling fellows from the gate.

GREGORY.

A herd of wolves as ſoon; they'll eat me up alive. O lack-a-day, Sir, you know little of a London mob.

NIGHTSHADE.

Go down I tell you, Sirrah, and diſperſe 'em.

GREGORY.

Why, Sir, 'tis more than my Lord Mayor can do: There's a man knock'd o' the head they ſay, and till there's another or two to keep him company, they'll never be at reſt: Leave 'em to fight it out.

NIGHTSHADE.

Leave 'em! why blockhead, it is me they follow: Nothing elſe ſhould have driven me into this houſe again.

GREGORY.

O Gemini, have you been knock'd o' the head?

NIGHTSHADE.

Why no, you fool, 'tis I have done the miſchief; but the moſt patient man alive cou'd do no leſs.

GREGORY.

Nay, Sir, if you have been playing the ſame tune upon their noddles, as you do upon mine, theſe London ſculls won't bear it; they are as brittle as a Shrewſbury cake.

Enter

Enter STAPLETON.

STAPLETON.

Hey-day, friend Andrew, what is all this noiſe and outcry?

NIGHTSHADE.

I think the devil's in the people, you ſhall hear—As I was coming down the ſtreet, in meditation on the parſon's pidgeon-houſe, a raſcally ſcaramouch, in a ſhort jerkin, with a cap and feather on his noddle, winds me a damn'd blaſt on his poſt horn, point-blank into my ear, flouriſhing his newſpapers full in my face at the ſame time: Now as there are no two things I hate on earth like newſpapers and noiſes, ſo I could not well avoid giving him a gentle remembrance with my cane upon his crown: The caſket gave a curſed crack and down tumbled the politician: Inſtantly the raggamuffins collected, and I took refuge here in your court-yard.

STAPLETON.

Nay, if you have ſilenc'd the Morning Poſt, you had better have drag'd the ſpeaker out of his coach, and beat his brains out with the mace. Do you conſider how many enemies you make by ſtopping the circulation of abuſe? 'tis as neceſſary to the city as the circulation of caſh.

NIGHTSHADE.

Go down I tell you, fellow, and make up the matter with a dram; 'tis as much as any newſpaper-head is worth in the kingdom; bid him not talk of damages; if my cane has ſplit his ſcull, 'tis no more than his plaguy poſt-horn did by mine: He was the aggreſſor.

STAPLETON.

Hark'ee, you'll find the matter ſettled, but it will not be amiſs to frighten him a little; you know how to manage it. *(aſide to Greg.*

GREGORY.

Moſt daintily I warrant you. [*Exit.*

Enter

Enter Mrs. STAPLETON *and* LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

O, Mr. Nightſhade, here's a piece of work!—this comes of being in a paſſion.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

A ſober citizen, a pains-taking induſtrious ſoul—

LÆTITIA.

A father of a family—eight helpleſs babes—I fear you've given him his laſt blow—Dear Sir, aſſiſt us! *(aſide.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Laſt blow! what matters that, when he gave me the firſt!

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Well, well, heaven knows, but anger is a frightful thing; it turns a man into a fury. Defend me, I ſay, from a paſſionate man.

NIGHTSHADE.

And yet, madam, give me leave to tell you, you are enough to make one: Is it nothing to have our nerves lacerated, our whole fabrick ſhook to atoms by theſe horrid noiſes! The law ſhould provide againſt ſuch nuiſances.

STAPLETON.

The law regards breaking of heads as the greater nuiſance of the two—But here comes Gregory—Well, what has become of the poſtman?

Enter GREGORY.

GREGORY.

He has ſounded his laſt horn! You may ſleep in quiet for the future. I tender'd him the dram your honour was ſo good to offer; but his teeth are cloſed, he can't accept your favour.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

O horrible, you've kill'd the man!

STAPLETON.

What ſay the ſtanders-by on the occaſion?

GREGORY.

GREGORY.

They give him an extraordinary character; they say he deliver'd a hand bill and sounded a posthorn better than any man in all the bills of mortality.

LÆTITIA

Thanks to Mr. Nightshade, he is likely to make a figure in the bills of mortality still—did you see the wound?

GREGORY.

A perilous gash, I'd not have such a star in my forehead to be the richest alderman in the city of London.

NIGHTSHADE.

'Tis a pity but he had been one, for then his horns might have warded off the blow.

GREGORY.

If I was your honour I would be looking out for the crowner; it will be well done to touch him pretty handsomely before he calls a quest upon the body.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Has the gentleman thought of any witnesses?

GREGORY.

You must have a steady set to prevent accidents, unprejudic'd, impartial men, that were not present at the affair, these people will never do: For my part, if you think of subpænaying me, you are a lost man, if I was once to shew this head of mine in open court you wou'd be condemned upon the face of it.

NIGHTSHADE.

Hold your tongue, rascal, I don't believe a word you say: I'll go down and be satisfied with my own eyes.

STAPLETON.

Hold, hold, friend Andrew, I'll not suffer it; they'll tear you piecemeal: Stay where you are and let me see if I can't quiet 'em; they know me and will credit what I tell 'em: If it is as Gregory says I'll send him to the hospital; we'll save him, if it's possible.

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Thank you, Maſter Stapleton, thank you heartily. That's friendly howſoever. [*Exit Stapleton.*

LÆTITIA. *(to Mrs. Stapleton.)*

Dear Madam, follow Mr. Stapleton, and perſuade him not to let him off; he muſt be made to feel.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

I think he ſhould, and will leave him in your hands. [*Exit.*

LÆTITIA.

Ah, Mr. Nightſhade, will you never be brought off from this unhappy temper? You ſee the diſmal effects of it; you feel them; I perceive you do: Your compunction is ſevere; I pity you—your ſituation brings the tears into my eyes.

NIGHTSHADE.

It's more than it does into mine; I tell you it is all a colluſion to extort money; and this rogue of mine falls in with the plot. Stapleton will tell another ſtory.

LÆTITIA.

I am afraid not; prepare yourſelf for the worſt, and conſider what attonement you can make to a diſconſolate widow.

NIGHTSHADE.

Spare your pity, young madam, you don't yet know how eaſy moſt widows are to be comforted.

GREGORY.

To be ſure, madam, his honour is in the right to bear up as they ſay, but it will be a trapan at leaſt: The china riviter at next door is a knowing man in fractures, and he ſays his ſcull will never ring well again ſo long as it is a ſcull. Oh, Sir, what will poor dear Maſter Jacky think of this? He's in the country, lord love him, and little dreams of this miſhap; I fear 'twill break his heart.

NIGHTSHADE.

Hold your tongue, you blockhead. Well, Mr. Stapleton, you've ſeen the man.

Re-enter STAPLTON.

STAPLETON.

I've seen the man, and pacified the mob.

NIGHTSHADE.

That's well; and it all proves a false alarm?

STAPLETON.

I wish I cou'd say so—but we must hope the best.

NIGHTSHADE.

How! what! sure he is not in danger? This fellow's report I did not regard; your's alarms me.

STAPLETON.

Compose yourself, however; the symptoms, indeed, are unpromising, but I have put him into good hands; he is convey'd to the London Hospital. Be a man; I am sorry to see you so uneasy.

LÆTITIA.

Dear Sir, 'tis natural; the worst of men have moments of compunction; it is not to be supposed that Mr. Nightshade, though fatally addicted to passion, is totally devoid of human feelings.

NIGHTSHADE.

I beg you'll be so kind to leave me; I shou'd wish to have a minute's recollection. Gregory, you may stay. *(He retires to the back scene.*

STAPLETON.

Lætitia, I begin to pity him.

LÆTITIA.

Have patience: let him chew the cud of reflection. Remorse, sometimes, like an advertising quack, will make great commotion in a man's constitution; but repentance is the regular physician, which by slow but steady means, conducts the patient to his cure.

[*Exeunt Stapleton and Lætitia.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Gregory!

GREGORY.

Your honour! How sanctified he looks! as who shou'd say, Gregory, give me a good word on my trial.

NIGHTSHADE.

I'm thinking, Gregory, of this accident.

GRE-

GREGORY.

Well, Sir, and how do you like it?

NIGHTSHADE.

Why, I'm in hopes it will blow over; I think they'll hardly profecute, and if the worſt ſhou'd happen, they can make nothing of it, but chance-medley or manſlaughter; nothing elſe, Gregory: So there's little to fear from the law. But as I am a man, who have always enforced the law againſt other people, d'ye obſerve me, and conſequently made enemies amongſt the wicked; I ſhou'd think, honeſt Gregory, you might ſtand in my place, and I'd be ſure to bring you off, and reward you into the bargain.

GREGORY.

Lord, Sir, a trifle; I ſhou'd be proud of being hang'd in the ſervice of ſo good a maſter; but I'm afraid there were too many people preſent, and 'twou'd be groſs preſumption to ſuppoſe any body cou'd miſtake me for your honour.

NIGHTSHADE.

Why certainly that is a hard pill to ſwallow; but what is to be done?

GREGORY.

Make over your eſtate to Maſter Jacky, and fly your country: What if I run to the French walk, and take you a paſſage in the Boulogne Pacquet? I may be in time to ſecure the cabbin before any other malefactor has taken a birth in it.

NIGHTSHADE.

Malefactor! prythee let me hear no more of your advice, it is but waſting time; I muſt have better counſel; and tho' brother Manlove has not pleas'd me in the matter of the pigeon-houſe, yet he's a good man in the main, and underſtands his buſineſs; run to him, d'ye hear, and deſire him to repair here directly, upon a preſſing concern; I know he'll not refuſe aſſiſtance when I really want him.

GREGORY.

I'll go directly—This is lucky. (*aſide.*

NIGHTSHADE.

And d'ye mind, leave me to open the affair to him; ſay nothing of the accident.

GREGORY.

No to be ſure; a likely matter, truly. [*Exit.*

NIGHTSHADE.

I wiſh I had not ſmote him quite ſo hard; and yet I ſhou'd have thought no miſchief cou'd have follow'd; I've ſtruck that clod-pate twice as hard, a hundred and a hundred times; 'tis that has ſpoilt my hand: it is ſurpriſing what ſome heads will bear; I wou'd I was with my poor boy in the country; what evil genius brought me up to this curſt ſcene of miſchief and miſchance? Dear fortune, reſcue me from this one ſcrape, and let me ſcramble out of the next as I can. [*Exit.*

Enter LÆTITIA *followed by* CHARLES.

LÆTITIA.

Now, Sir, be pleas'd to favour me with your commands.

CHARLES.

I am to ſolicit you in behalf of Mr. Manlove, that he may be allow'd the honour of making himſelf known to you.

LÆTITIA.

That is done already: I am no ſtranger to Mr. Manlove, believe me.

CHARLES.

So, ſo: ſhe has diſcovered me—Well, Madam, if Mr. Manlove is already known to you in his aſſumed character, may he not hope to improve that acquaintance in his real one?

LÆTITIA.

The character he has aſſumed, I muſt fairly own to you, gives me no favourable opinion of his real one: The ſhallow devices he made uſe of to impoſe on my underſtanding, when he thought himſelf ſecure from a diſcovery, betray a diſingenuous mind; and I muſt believe, that no man wou'd deſcend from the character of a gentleman, who was not wanting in the requiſites that go to the ſupport of it.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

I've made myſelf a precious blockhead: This mummery of the painter has diſguſted her. *(aſide.*

LÆTITIA.

As to his pretended taſte for painting, I will not affect more ſkill than I poſſeſs, but I will venture to ſay, that either he is ignorant of the art, or preſumes upon my being ſo.

CHARLES.

I'm fairly trapp'd: I muſt be prating of what I did not underſtand—I will not offer much in Mr. Manlove's behalf, Madam; but as to his ſkill in painting, you will be pleas'd to conſider him not as a profeſſor, but a lover only of the art.

LÆTITIA.

A lover, Sir! that is the laſt character I ſhou'd wiſh to conſider Mr. Manlove in.

CHARLES.

I perfectly underſtand you, Miſs Fairfax: You have ſaid enough: Mr. Manlove underſtands you: I believe I need not explain myſelf any farther.

LÆTITIA.

No, the caſe is perfectly clear; and I flatter myſelf you think I have been explicit on my part.

CHARLES.

There can be no complaint on that ſcore. Nothing now remains for Mr. Manlove, but to lay aſide, as ſoon as he is able, every thought, each hope that had Miſs Fairfax for its object.

LÆTITIA.

'Twill be much for my repoſe.

CHARLES.

Rely upon it, then, your repoſe ſhall never be diſturb'd by Mr. Manlove; never—Adieu. *(goes out.*

LÆTITIA.

Your ſervant—He's piqued, and it becomes him.

CHARLES, *(returns.)*

If ever you ſee him here again, ſay I have deceiv'd you—let me bear the blame: Your moſt obedient.

LÆTITIA.

Good day—I ſhall depend upon you.

CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Set your mind at reſt; I'll die before I break my word: Your ſervant. [*Exit.*

LÆTITIA. (*alone.*)

How wou'd this man plead in his own cauſe! Ah, why wou'd fortune not concert with nature, and either give the wealth of Manlove to his merits; or purchaſe out his merits to beſtow on Manlove's wealth?

Enter LUCY *haſtily.*

LUCY.

Where can this provoking cloak be laid? Every thing is in train, and there is not a moment to be loſt—Ah! (*ſcreams.*

LÆTITIA.

Lucy! whither away ſo faſt?

LUCY.

I declare I did not ſee you, Madam; I thought you was in your own room.

LÆTITIA.

But where are you running to, Child?

LUCY.

Only ſtepping out a little way.

LÆTITIA.

Stepping out! whither?

LUCY.

To my brother Dibble's.

LÆTITIA.

For what?

LUCY.

Upon a little family buſineſs, that's all. I cou'd have ſworn you had been with your gentleman in the painting-room.

LÆTITIA.

My gentleman! who is it you call my gentleman?

LUCY.

Humph—I'll ſhow her that I am in her ſecrets; it will keep her out of mine. (*aſide.*) I thought you was with Mr. Manlove; I left you together.

LÆTITIA.

Mr. Manlove! what is this you tell me?

LUCY.

LUCY.

Nay, Madam, don't be alarm'd, I am no tell-tale; and though I knew Mr. Manlove in his painter's character, nobody shall be the wiser for me, I assure you.

LÆTITIA.

As sure as can be it is so! what a discovery! *(aside.)* Well, Lucy, I find you are in the secret; you know the real Mr. Manlove; but pray tell me who is the pretended one? I have been received at Mr. Manlove's house, and visited here, by a young man who calls himself Manlove: Who is he?

LUCY.

Oh, dear Ma'am. don't you know him?—I wish I don't get into a scrape, but there is no going back—*(aside.)* It is young Mr. Nightshade out of the country, Ma'am; he is come up incog, and is afraid his father shou'd discover him, that's all.

LÆTITIA.

Is that all? I shan't take your word for that. I suspect there is more in the plot than you have related. If this young man is afraid of being seen by his father, what brings him hither? Answer me that?

LUCY.

Madam, I—I—I can't tell what brings him hither.

LÆTITIA.

Lucy, don't equivocate; for I will know. I saw him leave the house just now with your brother, you are following in great haste; upon family business you pretend; but I suspect upon no fair errand: Confess to me, for you shall not stir to your brother's 'till you do.

LUCY.

As you will for that, Madam, but I cannot endure to be suspected, and I will confess to you when I have done crying. *(weeps.*

LÆTITIA.

Do so, you had best.

LUCY.

Why then you must know, that Mr. Manlove, that is, I mean Mr. Nightshade, that calls himself Mr. Manlove, is fallen monstrously in love with——

LÆTITIA.

With whom?

LUCY.

LUCY.

Me, Madam.—Vain creature! I know she thought it was herself (*aside.*

LÆTITIA.

And you believ'd him, did you?

LUCY.

Yes, Madam, I believ'd him.

LÆTITIA.

Well, and what did he do then?

LUCY.

Nay nothing, Madam, that's all.

LÆTITIA.

Come, come, Lucy, but I know it is not all: You have given him your company, as you call it, have you not? and you are now going to meet him at your brother's, are you not?

LUCY.

No—yes—but if I am, it's all in fair and honest way of courtship: Oh, if he was to go for to offer any thing unhandsome to me, I should tear his eyes out. Nobody can say I have the least speck or flaw, no not so big as the point of a pin, on my reputation. It would be the death of me—I would sooner part from my life than my virtue; he has promis'd—

LÆTITIA.

What has he promis'd?

LUCY.

To marry me.

LÆTITIA.

Marry you! ridiculous.

LUCY.

Ay, I knew the jealous thing could not bear that; she will burst with envy. (*aside.*

LÆTITIA.

Hark'ee, Lucy; I commend you for the honesty of your confession, run into my chamber; Mr. Stapleton is coming this way, and will interrupt us: Compose yourself, and we will talk over the affair at leisure. (*Exit Lucy.*) Happy, happy revolution! What a ridiculous mal-entendu had I fallen into! Oh how deliciously I will torture this fine gentleman-painter for his contrivances! ACT.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Enter JACK *and* DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

COME along, Squire, the lady is expecting you at my apartment. Every thing is in train, and 'twill be your own fault now if you are not the happieſt man in England.

JACK.

Hold a moment, Dibble, hold! My brother's coming and I can't reſiſt the pleaſure of a little natural exultation.

DIBBLE.

Perverſe, vexation! Are you mad? By heavens you'll loſe the lady—and what is worſe, by heavens ſhe'll looſe the gentleman! *(aſide.*

Enter CHARLES.

CHARLES.

So, Jack, I hope your frolick's at an end: you've been diſorderly in your cups I find.

JACK.

Where did you hear that?

CHARLES.

Where I leaſt wiſh'd to hear it; at Mr. Stapleton's; Miſs Fairfax told me.

JACK.

Miſs Fairfax told you, did ſhe ſo? Miſs Fairfax was not very angry when ſhe told you, I ſhou'd gueſs: You did not find me greatly out of favour, did you?

CHARLES.

In truth I had ſo little occaſion to boaſt of my own reception, Jack, that I did not give much attention to what ſhe ſaid of you.

JACK.

That's honeſtly confeſſed however: So your reception was but cold, and you have drop'd all thoughts of a connexion I ſuppoſe?

CHARLES.

Intirely: I've received my peremptory diſmiſſion.

JACK.

Poor Charles! you are diſmiſs'd? Your perſon, genius, equipage, eſtate, all ſtand you in no ſtead? Another is preferr'd before you—perhaps ſome country booby like myſelf; and don't you wiſh you knew the happy man?

CHARLES.

Not I.

DIBBLE.

What are you at? you'll ruin all.

JACK.

I ſhall burſt if I don't tell him—Brother, I believe I cou'd direct you to the man that's done all the miſchief.

CHARLES.

I give you credit, Jack, for that: I do believe you've done me all the miſchief in your power.

JACK.

Who, I? Oh dear, you flatter me; a country whelp ſupplant a travell'd gentleman like you? impoſſible—and yet——

CHARLES.

What yet?

JACK.

This witneſs on my finger here would ſtagger ſome folks; I am apt to think Miſs Fairfax means to wear it in good time.

CHARLES.

A wedding ring! you muſt excuſe me, Jack; I want credulity for that.

JACK.

Juſt as you pleaſe; I bought it for her wearing, and meaſur'd her finger for that purpoſe, and did intend with the parſon's help to put it on with that deſign.

DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

Will nothing ſtop your mouth? By heavens I'll throw the matter up. *(aſide to Jack.*

CHARLES.

You! you marry Miſs Lætitia Fairfax!

DIBBLE.

Dear 'Squire be perſuaded, and come away. *(aſide to Jack.*

JACK.

Hold your tongue I tell you—I, I, and not the ingenious, learned, travell'd Mr. Manlove; here's a witneſs that will vouch for what I ſay. *(Dibble offers to go.)* Where are you running?—come back. Tell my brother what you know of Miſs Fairfax's partiality for a certain, inſignificant, ignorant fellow, call'd Jack Nightſhade.

DIBBLE.

For ſhame, Sir, you ſhould not talk of lady's favours.

CHARLES.

Your friend is cautious you perceive.

JACK.

Hang him, he's ſo by habit; he's a lawyer—but ſpeak out: You are come to fetch me to Miſs Fairfax, and Miſs Fairfax is at your lodgings, and I am to be the lady's huſband, and the bill is a true bill, is it not?

DIBBLE.

It is.

CHARLES.

Errors excepted—You forgot your caution. This can never be. Hark'ee, Sir; a little croſs examination if you pleaſe.

JACK.

As much of that as you think proper. He's us'd to that ſport; he'll dodge like a rabbit in a warren.

CHARLES.

You ſay the lady is at your lodgings: Anſwer me, what lady?

DIBBLE.

Sir, I believe—what lady?—that's your queſtion—what lady is at my lodgings?

CHARLES.

Ay, Sir, without equivocation,

DIBBLE.

Well, Sir, I am not upon oath in this buſineſs; nor am I obliged to aſcertain the identity of people's perſons; but the lady at my lodgings I take to be Miſs Fairfax.

JACK.

Does that ſatisfy you? Brother, I thank you for your coat; it has made an impreſſion you perceive.

CHARLES.

Have a little patience—You take her to be Miſs Fairfax?—deſcribe her perſon.

DIBBLE.

I never meddled with her perſon, Sir; that's not for me to do.

CHARLES.

Is ſhe fair complexion'd?

DIBBLE.

I think ſo.

JACK.

I can't ſay I do.

CHARLES.

Light hair, or dark?

DIBBLE.

My eyes are none of the beſt, but I think Miſs Fairfax's hair is white.

JACK.

Black as a crow, by Jupiter.

CHARLES.

Tall, or ſhort?

DIBBLE.

I never meaſur'd her but, I take her to be tall.

JACK.

Death and the devil, why you're drunk! Fair, tall, light-hair'd! why ſhe's a little, dapper, duſky damſel, with a poll as black as——

CHARLES.

Hark'ee, Sir, a word in your ear. *(to Dibble.*

DIBBLE.

DIBBLE.

Blown, as I hope to be a judge! *(aside.*

CHARLES.

You have a ſiſter anſwers this deſcription: You're diſcover'd and a villain. *(aside to Dibble.*

JACK.

Hold, hold, no cloſeting of witneſſes.

DIBBLE.

Good Sir, be not offended. Mr. Nightſhade firſt borrow'd your name, and my ſiſter to keep up the jeſt, made free with that of Miſs Fairfax—nothing but a frolick.

CHARLES.

What do you tell me? did my brother take my name in any interview with Miſs Fairfax?

DIBBLE.

Certainly, Sir; ſhe calls him Mr. Manlove at this moment.

CHARLES.

Away; your news has ſaved your ears, away.

DIBBLE.

'Egad we are all blown up: I muſt go and tell Lucy to make her peace. [*Exit.*

JACK.

How now; what's this? Hollo! where's Dibble running?

CHARLES.

Your humble Servant, Mr. Manlove—Take my name, my credit from me, Jack? It is too much. You muſt be ſaved however.

JACK.

I muſt be ſatisfied. Is this fair dealing? Where is Dibble gone?

CHARLES.

Let him go where he will; he has made a fool of you.

JACK.

Yes, but I'm not a fool to take your word for that; ſo let me paſs.

CHARLES.

Nay, Jack, but hear reaſon——

JACK.

JACK.

Yes, and while you are reaſoning, I ſhall loſe the lady.

CHARLES.

I ſay the lady; have a care ſhe does not prove the lady's maid.

JACK.

The maid! ah, brother, I'm too cunning to take that upon truſt. You have raiſed my curioſity however, and I will know the truth----So let me go, for go I will, and that's enough. [*Exit.*

CHARLES.

A match, we'll ſtart together. My happineſs is ſure as much concern'd in this diſcovery, as your's. (*follows him.*

SCENE II. *Stapleton's Houſe.*

Enter NIGHTSHADE *and* MANLOVE.

NIGHTSHADE.

I ſhould think, brother, there's no danger but a jury will ſee the action in this light.

MANLOVE.

'Tis hard to ſay; juries are tickliſh things; the law will look to the motives: *If it ſhall appear that it was done not from the wickedneſs of the heart, but from the ſudden heat of the paſſions,* a jury will bring it in *Manſlaughter.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Well, and don't all the world know there's not a more paſſionate man living than myſelf?

MANLOVE.

You have ſometimes told me I was paſſionate; I never heard you ſay as much for yourſelf.

NIGHTSHADE.

But if there was no malice in the deed, how can it ever be deem'd murder?

MANLOVE.

Malice is threefold: Firſt, malice expreſs; ſecondly, malice implied; thirdly, malice prepenſe: Of each in their order——

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Pshaw! pr'ythee, what avails describing any, when I've none of all the three?

MANLOVE.

Had you no quarrel then before the act?

NIGHTSHADE.

Quarrel! why no---or if I had, 'twas only a few words.

MANLOVE.

Is that the cane you struck him with?

NIGHTSHADE.

This is the twig; I call it nothing more.

MANLOVE.

I doubt the law will construe it a weapon of offence.

NIGHTSHADE.

And pray now was not his a weapon of offence? I believe the whole town thinks it such, of great offence; sick or well, there's no repose for those horns. What I did was in self-defence.

MANLOVE.

I fear 'twill not be thought so: If indeed you had any *wound to shew whereby the violence of the battery might be proved*——

NIGHTSHADE.

Wound! why I have a wound as bad an one as his; only mine lies within side of my head, and his without: He has broke the drum of my ears.

MANLOVE.

What do you talk of ears? if you had been happy enough now to have *lost a finger, an eye, or a foretooth, it would have been the loss of a defensive member, and a mayhem at common law.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Well, brother, be so kind to tell me what I am to do.

MANLOVE.

Repent.

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Why ſo I will, provided you ſay nothing about the matter, and my country acquits me upon trial; but if I am to be puniſhed for my faults, what ſignifies repenting of 'em into the bargain?

MANLOVE.

Well, Andrew, I muſt tell you there is yet a way of getting honourably out of this affair, provided you will bind yourſelf to me, never to lift your hand in wrath againſt a fellow creature.

NIGHTSHADE.

Why no, to be ſure I ſhan't; I thought all ſculls were as hard as Gregory's.

MANLOVE.

Come; you muſt have done with Gregory's; nay, I wou'd not alone exempt man from your fury, but beaſt likewiſe: Cruelty muſt not be practiſed in any ſhape: Nature muſt not be wounded in any of her works. Promiſe me this upon the faith of an honeſt man, and I'll redeem you from this ſcrape.

NIGHTSHADE.

Look'ee, Brother, I am ſenſible of the folly of it, but as it's impoſſible to ſay where temptation may lead, there lies the fatal weapon; uſe it who will; I'll never take another ſtick in hand, till I'm obliged to go upon crutches. *(throws down his cane.*

MANLOVE.

Say you ſo, then I'll cure your broken head in an inſtant. Come with me, and you ſhall ſee what diſpatch I can make upon occaſion. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *The Painting Room.*

LÆTITIA *is diſcover'd painting*; LUCY *attending*; *a layman placed at ſome diſtance.*

LÆTITIA.

Theſe touches come off well; this laſt ſitting was a good one: Methinks I never was in better look. Lucy, what ſay you? is it like?

LUCY.

LUCY.

Like, Madam! 'tis alive; 'tis Mr. Stapleton himſelf.

LÆTITIA.

Is the ſervant gone for his cloaths to dreſs the layman? I'll poſitively rub in the drapery now I'm about it. Well, child, I've turn'd this matter in my head, and I believe I muſt forgive you; there's no holding out againſt contrition; I believe your brother was to blame—ſo this painter then is Mr. Manlove?

LUCY.

Yes, madam, and a lovely man he is; if you pleaſe to remember, I told you ſo the firſt moment I ſaw him; ſo genteel, ſo well-bred, ſo perfectly the gentleman. Oh, here comes Thomas with the cloaths—ſhall I help to put 'em on?

Enter SERVANT.

LÆTITIA.

So, ſo! that's right—let the arm fall naturally—it's very well as it is—Now turn the layman with its ſide to me—no, t'other way—a little more. Stay, let me do it myſelf. Now ſtand away—that's it.

SERVANT.

Have you any further commands, madam?

LÆTITIA.

No; yes. If the young gentleman who was with me this morning ſhould call again, ſhew him up hither.

SERVANT.

The painter?

LÆTITIA.

Yes, the painter, as you call him.

SERVANT.

Madam, he is this moment come into the court-yard.

LÆTITIA.

Indeed! then do as I bid you. *(Exit Ser.)* So, ſo, he has found out the miſtake as well as myſelf.

LUCY.

Pray, Madam, give me leave to go and ſhew Mr. Manlove hither.

LÆTITIA.

Do ſo, Lucy, do ſo—What a flutter am I in!—but, hark'ee, don't give him any intimation that I know him. (*Exit Lucy.*) This is happy! I am ſuch a gainer by this revolution that I cannot find in my heart to be angry with the girl—That ever I ſhou'd be the bubble of ſo groſs an impoſition! Hark; he's coming. I'll pretend to be at work! tho' I am ſo confuſed I don't know one colour from another. O heavens, how charmingly he looks! (*ſhe riſes.*

Enter CHARLES.

CHARLES.

I aſk a thouſand pardons; I entreat I mayn't diſturb you.

LÆTITIA.

Oh, Sir, don't mention it: You ſee I uſe no ceremony.

CHARLES.

You're infinitely obliging. I have ventur'd once again, Miſs Fairfax, to intrude upon your patience.

LÆTITIA.

As often as you pleaſe; you're always welcome here. Come hither—I muſt have your judgement. How do you like what I have done?

CHARLES.

All that you do is well; but you'll forgive me, I am full of other thoughts, and wiſh to loſe no moment of this happy opportunity.

LÆTITIA.

Piſh! I muſt have you flatter me: Sit down—This drappery puzzles me—Sit down, I ſay: Your modern habits are ſo ſtiff. How ſhall I manage it? Come, take the chalk; nay, no excuſe: Though you are ſo ſmartly dreſt, you abſolutely muſt aſſiſt me.

CHARLES.

I beg to be excus'd: my happineſs is ſtaked upon this criſis; my heart is full and muſt have vent.

LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

How can you be ſo tireſome? Now you are going upon the old topick, Mr. Manlove.

CHARLES.

I muſt confeſs it is of him that I wou'd ſpeak.

LÆTITIA.

Fye, fye upon you! call to mind your promiſe. Hold—ſuppoſe I throw aſide this ugly brown and gold, and put him in a fancy dreſs; What ſay you?

CHARLES.

Nothing; for I am nothing: I have no art, no faculty of painting; I am an impoſtor. On my knees I do beſeech you, forgive and hear me.

LÆTITIA.

Pray be compoſed, nor let your zeal for Mr. Manlove agitate you thus. I'll ſave you all this trouble, by confeſſing freely to you, I have chang'd my mind ſince laſt we parted.

CHARLES.

Chang'd! as how?

LÆTITIA.

As you'll be pleas'd to hear. I think of Mr. Manlove now as favourably as you yourſelf cou'd wiſh.

CHARLES.

Madam——

LÆTITIA.

I think the woman muſt be bleſt, whom ſuch a man ſhall honour with his choice.

CHARLES.

Indeed! I may preſume then you wou'd condeſcend to countenance his addreſſes.

LÆTITIA.

That's a home queſtion; but I think it is not eaſy to deny him any thing.

CHARLES.

I'm thunderſtruck! The boy has told me the truth, ſhe likes him and I am undone.

LÆTITIA.

What is the matter now? You ſeem quite diſconcerted. Is not this the very point you aim'd at? Hav'n't I confeſt all that you wiſh'd?

CHARLES.

Oh, no! You torture me.

LÆTITIA.

Man, reſtleſs man! whom nothing I can do will ſatisfy: Offended when I refuſe your friend; when I accept him, tortur'd.

CHARLES.

And tortur'd I muſt be: for know, moſt wretched as I am, it is not for a friend I plead, but for myſelf.

LÆTITIA.

Well, Sir, I'm free to ſay, I ſtill abide by my confeſſion: What you tell me ſhakes not my eſteem for Mr. Manlove.

CHARLES.

Then I have loſt you; for that Manlove is my younger brother, and has won you under a fictitious name: I that really own it, am diſcarded.

LÆTITIA.

How purblind you long-ſighted wits ſometimes can be! You tell me you are Mr. Manlove; have I revok'd my opinion? You ſay your brother took your name; have I expreſs'd myſelf in favour of Mr. Nightſhade?

CHARLES.

O heavens! I do begin to hope——

LÆTITIA.

You ſhou'd not puzzle me with ſuch croſs purpoſes. Will you be Mr. Manlove, and believe what I now ſay of him, or give that name to your brother, and hear me repeat what I lately ſaid of him?

CHARLES.

Oh, let me be what you approve; I aſk no higher bleſſing.

LÆTITIA.

We are interrupted. See, your formidable rival! Oh, you have made a fine confuſion—Come away.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter JACK.

JACK.

Hiſt! hark'ee! brother Charles!—He won't turn back, and I dare not follow him, for fear I run into old

old Crusty's jaws: I am fain to go as warily in this house as if I was riding over a warren. Didlikins! here comes the girl at last—Oh, fye upon you, Miss, oh fye—

Enter LUCY *hastily.*

LUCY.

Hush! hush! A truce to your reproaches—Hide yourself; your father's at my heels.

JACK.

My father! Drown it! what shall I do now?

LUCY.

Here, get behind this layman; stoop: stand close: I'll put the shutters to; I owe you that good turn, at least, to bring you off. Stand close!

Enter NIGHTSHADE.

NIGHTSHADE.

So, so! What's doing here? Darkness at mid-day! Your servant, Mr. Stapleton; I see you notwithstanding; there you are: Fine goings on at your age: Smuggling your chambermaids in corners—Call you this fair trading? Oh, if your wife saw this.

JACK. *(from behind.)*

For pity's sake keep him off. He's coming!

LUCY.

Where are you coming, Sir? Pray leave the room; your company disturbs him; don't you see how ill he is?

NIGHTSHADE.

Poor gentleman! and so you shut out the light to make him better? Ay, let him lean upon you, comfort him; I dare be sworn he has need of it—Shame upon you, Master Stapleton! What you'll not speak, not you. Here comes one will make you speak, and stir too, to some tune. Here, Madam, here's your virtuous husband; here's a picture of modern conjugal fidelity.

Enter

Enter Mrs. STAPLETON.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

A picture truly, for I think you're talking to nothing elſe: Why don't the girl open the ſhutters? What do you ſtand there for? O, ho! (*ſees Jack.*

Enter STAPLETON *and* MANLOVE.

STAPLETON.

What my old friend, conferring with the layman! Break his head, Andrew, if you pleaſe; no manſlaughter can lie there. (*the window is opened.*

NIGHTSHADE.

How's this! why I proteſt I took it for yourſelf; and I was ſcandaliz'd to ſee a ſober citizen in ſuch cloſe conference with a damſel of ſo great temptations.

MANLOVE.

Come, brother, you have had one warning againſt anger, let this be a memento to guard againſt ſuſpicion.

NIGHTSHADE.

Brother, you know I can't endure advice; I ſee my error; that's enough.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Yes, but you don't ſee all; there's more behind the ſcenes; your greateſt error, Mr. Nightſhade, is not yet found out.

NIGHTSHADE.

Why, what the vengeance have we here? Come out: Let's ſee your face. Son Jack! Furies and flames! My boy as I'm alive.

MANLOVE.

This is judgement upon judgement.

NIGHTSHADE.

Which of you all have conjur'd up this plot? Oh, thou unutterably vile and ſorry puppy! Hound, that I have bred to tear my heart out—Jack, Jack, Jack, for you to uſe me thus; you whom I've made my boaſt, the ſtaff of my old age—I wou'd I had a ſtaff, I'd beat your brains out with it, blockhead, ſo I wou'd.

MANLOVE.

Hold, hold, no more of that; remember promiſes.

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

And in that jacket too; the ſubſtance of a farm laid out upon your back: Sirrah, whence came that conjuror's coat, that ſcoundrel's livery? Anſwer me.

JACK

Father, 'tis none of mine; 'tis brother Charles's.

NIGHTSHADE.

There, Mr. Manlove! there's your pretty gentleman! a fine account; the corrupter of his brother.

STAPLETON.

Be more patient, friend Andrew.

NIGHTSHADE.

I won't be patient; I've a father's privilege to juſtify my paſſion. Hark'ee, Sir, what brought you up to town? Who ſeduced you hither? I ſuppoſe the faſhionable ſcoundrel who lent you that fool's coat.

JACK.

Lord love you, father, 'twas a frolic of my own: Charles wou'd have had me travell'd home again.

MANLOVE.

Was that like a ſeducer?

JACK.

And ſo I ſhou'd afore now, but that I fell into a kind of a love-ſuit here, with the young lady of this houſe.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

What do you ſay? a love-ſuit!

STAPLETON.

With my ward, Miſs Fairfax? impoſſible.

LUCY.

Ay, now comes my examination: I had beſt eſcape. (*aſide.*

JACK.

Hold, hold; my whole defence turns upon your teſtimony—Stay where you are. (*To Lucy.*

NIGHTSHADE.

Ay, let us hear; there's ſomething in this plea: Let us hear more of the love-ſuit.

JACK.

Nay, 'twas not much of a ſuit neither; it was very ſoon over; Miſs was coming, Dibble got a licence, and I bought a ring. STA-

STAPLETON.

Why you're beſide yourſelf, young man.

NIGHTSHADE.

Go on! the boy ſpeaks well, and ſhan't be browbeat: Hear him out.

JACK.

And ſo, as I was telling you, I ſhou'd have married her out-right, if brother Charles had not thrown a ſpoke in my wheel.

NIGHTSHADE.

See there, ſee there! What ſay you for your favorite now? Prove what you ſay, my lad, and I will do you juſtice to the extent of my eſtate.

JACK.

Say you ſo, father? then it ſhall out: Why brother Charles, you muſt know, had a month's mind for the lady himſelf; ſo he pretended to perſuade me that I was made a fool of, and that the girl I was going to marry was not Miſs Fairfax.

NIGHTSHADE.

There, there! you hear it now from the tongue of truth and innocence: You're ſatisfied, I hope. I beg the lady may be ſent for in.

JACK.

Sent for! a pretty joke; why there ſhe ſtands.

Mr. and Mrs. STAPLETON.

Ha. ha, ha!

NIGHTSHADE.

I'm thunderſtruck.

JACK.

And ſo am I; for if it had not been for brother Charles, as ſure as you are here alive, we had both been happy before now.

NIGHTSHADE.

This, this the lady?

JACK.

Ay, father, that's ſhe: I hope you like her.

STAPLETON.

Lucy! Lucy Dibble!

MANLOVE.

The ſiſter of my clerk!

NIGHT-

NIGHTSHADE.

Death and the devil! a chambermaid!

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Oh, you inſidious huſſy! what can you ſay for yourſelf?

LUCY.

I am not here upon my trial, madam; that is paſt, and Miſs Fairfax has ſign'd my pardon. As for this gentleman, if I did put a little trick upon him under my miſtreſs's name, he paid me in my own coin, by paſſing himſelf off under his brother's. The parties repreſented are not preſent; but let me ſtand at Miſs Fairfax's ſide, and place him by Mr. Manlove, and I leave the world to decide which is the greateſt impoſtor of the two.

JACK.

Oh, you abominable little vixen!

MANLOVE.

Keep your peace, Jack, wou'd you prove your valour on a woman?

JACK.

Then by Jupiter, I'll break every bone in lawyer Dibble's ſkin, before this day's at an end.

STAPLETON.

Underſtand yourſelf, child; the daughter of a footman is no mate for the ſon of a gentleman.

NIGHTSHADE.

To be ſure: Well ſaid, Maſter Stapleton!

LUCY.

True, Sir, but the footman bred his daughter as a gentleman ſhou'd, and the gentleman gave his ſon the education of a footman. [*Exit.*

MANLOVE.

Brother Andrew——

NIGHTSHADE.

Pooh!

JACK.

Father, that laſt wipe was at you.

NIGHTSHADE.

Hold your tongue, blockhead; get you home into the country, till the ſoil, and be a beaſt of burden; 'tis what nature meant you for.

MANLOVE.

Nay, brother, blame not nature, ſhe has done her part: 'Tis you that ſhou'd have till'd the ſoil. O Charles, you come upon a wiſh; your father is impatient to embrace you.

Enter CHARLES.

CHARLES.

Let but my father add his approbation, and my happineſs ſhall be compleat.

MANLOVE.

He can't withhold it. Come, throw prejudice aſide; let wrath and jealouſy be caſt far from you: Look upon this youth; he is your ſon; you are the principle, but do you ſubſtitute the juſtice to confeſs my ſyſtem has ſucceeded; it is poſſible you ſee to gain a knowledge of this world, and not be tainted with its wickedneſs.

NIGHTSHADE.

'Tis mighty well; but for this cub of mine I'll diſinherit him to the devil; I cou'd find in my heart, to die to-morrow, for the pleaſure of cutting him off with a ſhilling.

JACK.

Lord, father, in that caſe a little matter wou'd content me.

MANLOVE.

Come, come, the law has made proviſion againſt that: Jack muſt inherit your eſtate die when you will.

NIGHTSHADE.

Then I'll not die at all; I'll live for ever on purpoſe to plague him; I'll ſtarve the whelp; he ſhall have nothing to live upon, but rain-water and pig-nuts.

MANLOVE.

Then, Andrew, I will keep him; he ſhall live with me.

NIGHTSHADE.

Say you ſo, brother? then I'll forgive him and keep him to myſelf; and ſince you talk of knowledge of the world, I'll ſhew him what it is: Come hither, Jack,

Jack: I'll go with him as far as there is water to carry us; I'll travel him to the world's end: Zounds, I'll take him out of it, rather than be out-gone.

JACK.

Take the laſt ſtage by yourſelf, dear father. Farewel, uncle; good-bye, Charles!

[*Exeunt Nightſhade and Jack.*

MANLOVE.

Incorrigible humouriſt! Come my ſon, and come my worthy friends: Where is your amiable ward? I ſtill have hopes this day of rancour and confuſion will conclude with joy.

STAPLETON.

And ſo it ſhall, if my perſuaſion can have weight.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Perſuaſion never fails, when inclination aids it. Look, ſhe comes.

CHARLES.

And comes like hope, like ſpring and ſunſhine to the longing year, with ſmiles of ſoft complacency and love.

Enter LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

Ay, now your rival's gone, you think the field your own; but every hour will raiſe freſh rivals, for every hour will draw forth freſh perfections from a character like your's, and each demand the preference in our admiration and applauſe.

STAPLETON.

Well ſaid, my girl, then there's a bargain made: What need of further words?

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Fye upon you, Mr. Stapleton, you diſtreſs her; you are too much in haſte about theſe matters..

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Why, Dolly, you and I concluded our matter within the week.

Mrs. STAPLETON.

Longer, 'twas longer: Don't believe him, Lætitia.

LÆTITIA.

LÆTITIA.

Excuſe me, I can readily believe that hearts ſo fitted for each other might unite at once by mutual attraction.

MANLOVE.

Doſt thou believe it, fair one? then away with all delay! not even the law, its own parent, ſhall be privileg'd in this caſe; we'll work like ſhipwrights at an armament, and Dibble, as a puniſhment for his intrigues, ſhall labour double tides. If marriage ever ſhall regain its dignity in this degenerate age, it muſt be by the union of ſuch hearts as theſe.

FINIS.

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